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Casey's Hope: A Communication Ethics Response to Baseball's Fall and its Future

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CASEY'S HOPE:

A COMMUNICATION ETHICS RESPONSE TO BASEBALL'S FALL AND ITS FUTURE

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By

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ABSTRACT

CASEY'S HOPE:

A COMMUNICATION ETHICS RESPONSE TO BASEBALL'S FALL AND ITS FUTURE

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May 2016

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Ronald C. Arnett.

Baseball was once seen as America's pastime, but somehow lost its way. Baseball was inherently American, and stood for more than a game. Yet a number of events caused baseball to fall from grace. Using Ernest Thayer's poem "Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of Republic Sung in the Year 1888" as a frame work, this project identifies three events that caused baseball's fall and three additional events that currently threaten the game, which will be evaluated according to Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. Understanding the game's past and present will help to develop a methodology to apply to threats of the game to ensure baseball's future.

To begin, this project identifies three events that originally caused baseball's fall: the Black Sox Scandal in the 1919 World Series, two franchises moving from New York to Los Angles, and the Labor Strike of 1994. Each event creates distance between the game of baseball and its idealized past. The first chapter also propels the following three chapters by viewing the

current threats of the game as three imaginary pitches for Casey with the goal of attempting to change his original fate from the poem, in which he struck out.

Chapter II, Casey's first imaginary pitch, deals with the steroids crisis. The home run era helped to revitalize the game after the Labor Strike, but the success was short-lived. "The Mitchell Report" was first published on December 13, 2007. The report was the culmination of a 21-month investigation of anabolic steroid-use in baseball, and identified 89 MLB players linked to steroids. Although the records and statistics were put into question, the harshest result of this event was that it called into question the ethics of the baseball – with the ongoing suspicion and a lack of trust toward the game, baseball no longer fosters havens of trust. Additionally, the lack of an immediate response by the league showed a delayed reaction, one of deficiency. This is the first strike to Casey in the imaginary at bat.

Perhaps propelled by the Steroid Era, the next event that continues to threaten the game is the sabermetric movement, marked by the publication of *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game* (Lewis, 2003). Sabermetrics in general attempt to provide new and more technologically driven metrics to better understand the game. Although learning more about the game is good, dismissing old statistics causes people to lose ground and connection to the past. The over-emphasis of sabermetrics shows excess, again causing Casey to swing too early and miss another pitch.

The final event that threatens the game of baseball is the implementation of technology, namely instant replay, into the game, which occurred in 2008. The game of baseball assessed the successes of other sports' uses of instant replay, withheld implementation over 20 years later than the NFL, and originally made modest additions to the game. The focus on the past helps to

preserve tradition and helps to foster a good connection for the game in the present game. With the third pitch, Casey found the balance between deficiency and excess and hit a home run.

The final chapter lists ongoing problems to each of the three events identified in Chapters II-IV, provides a detailed critique of progress as understood through Modernity, assesses the ways in which Aristotle's doctrine of the mean can be used as a philosophical framework to deal with ethical issues, theorizes various uses of this methodology, and finally discusses the ways in which baseball can be preserved for the next century.

The afterward revisits the original poem of "Casey at the Bat" and provides an updated version, "Casey's Hope."

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dad:

Thank you for teaching me about baseball, life, and love. You will always be my hero.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The path we envision is rarely the path we take. This dissertation project is a prime example of that fact. Although the route was circuitous and contained a fair number of detours, I am humbled to see this project through to its completion. I could not have completed this project without the love and support of those around me.

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Chapter I: The Lasting Effects of Casey's At Bat

Baseball was once seen as America's pastime, but somehow lost its way. Baseball was inherently American, and stood for more than a game. In 1936, after baseball's rise to success, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said the following about the game:

> Baseball has been called the national pastime and rightly so because it stands for fair play, clean living and good sportsmanship which are our national heritage. That is why it has such a warm place in our hearts.

The President's words were not just speaking for him; instead, at the time, the majority of the nation identified baseball as America's pastime. In many respects, baseball was our nation's salvation. The game endured World Wars, the Stock Market Crash, the Civil Rights Movement, and 9-11. Baseball can be seen as the little red thread that has tightly tied the seams of our country's traditions together. However, at some point, that changed.

The "warm place in our hearts" that President Roosevelt spoke about has been replaced with feelings of skepticism toward the game and those who profit from it. There have been dramatic shifts in baseball over its history, but many aspects do remain the same. The mound has been 60 feet 6 inches away from the plate, the bases 90 feet apart forming a diamond, and the games have been nine innings for over a century (*The Baseball-Almanac*).

Major League Baseball (MLB) was established in 1869, and remains both prosperous and popular today. However, the National Football League (NFL) has taken over baseball as the sport to generate the highest revenue on an annual basis in America (Chemi, 2014; Brown, 2014*).* But more than the money, baseball is losing its widespread appeal (Smith, 2014). What has happened to cause such a decline? Many people would point toward the steroid outbreak in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Latiner, 2006; Heiles, 2009), but there were issues with baseball

long before performance-enhancing drugs entered the game. So, if it was not steroids that caused this fall from grace, what happened to baseball to cause the fall?

Similar to Ernest Thayer's fictional character, Casey, baseball was once seen as a beacon of hope. In fact, many similarities exist between Thayer's iconic poem "Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888"[1] and the game of baseball.

In an attempt to best understand why baseball is no longer seen as America's pastime, I turn to Thayer's poem as a way to engage with the past itself.

The Outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:

The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play.

And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,

A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

At the beginning of the poem, Mudville, the home team, was down 4-2. Juxtaposing Mudville with America, one can then view America as being behind in the game. Specifically, after the turn of the century, America was still in search of its independent identity. Long after the country's independence, many of America's traditions were still deeply seeded in other countries in the 19th century. It was not until the turn of the century that included the rapidly growing cities across the nation, the construction of steel mills, the manufacturing of gasoline vehicles, and the wide spread popularity of the telephone that America built an identity of its own. It is no coincidence that baseball, America's game, also gained credibility during this period. As a world power (Mintz & McNeil, 2013), America was definitely on the rise, but in many respects still an underdog – just like Mudville.

[1] The entire poem can viewed in Appendix A.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest

Clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;

They thought, if only Casey could get but a whack at that -

We'd put up even money, now, with Casey at the bat.

America was a strong nation, but was unproven compared to other world powers like Germany, Britain, and Russia. Many people did not believe America was on the same level as the others, and "Germany was the greatest power on the continent and certainly rivaled Britain as an industrial power with every indication that it would overtake Britain as an industrial power" (Winter, 1997). America clung on to the hope that their identity, a part of which was baseball, would fight its way to the top the same way that the Mudville faithful believed in Casey. The underlying message in this stanza is that hope prevails, even in bleak times.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,

And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;

So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,

For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,

And Blake, the much despisèd, tore the cover off the ball;

And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,

There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

This portion of the poem seems serendipitous, when good things happen although they were not expected to happen. Both Flynn and Blake were to bat before Casey, and they both reached base safely. Although some may read this portion of the story as a simple set-up for Casey batting, it

can also be viewed as more than that; in fact, this is a critical turning point to the poem. Without the consecutive hits from Flynn and Blake, Casey never would have had the opportunity to come to the plate. In similar fashion, without the thriving economy and the technological advances at the turn of the century, baseball may never have been given the chance to get to the plate. According to the United States Census Bureau (2015), America's total population was 23.1 million in 1850, and 76.2 million by 1900. Along with the rapid growth of the nation came a booming economy and technological advances to meet the new demands. If the country didn't take strides forward at this time, perhaps baseball would not have seen its steady growth. Additionally, without advances to the infrastructure of the nation, people could not invest in entertainment – like baseball.

> Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
> It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
> It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
> For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

Especially near the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, attendance grew significantly in baseball. In 1890, the highest attendance of a home field team was set by the Philadelphia Phillies in Philadelphia Baseball Grounds where they averaged 2,248 attendees per game (*Baseball-Almanac).* That record was broken seven times by 1905 when the Chicago White Sox averaged 8,702 attendees per game in South Side Park (II) (*Baseball-Almanac*). The unprecedented growth of the game was in direct connection with the game's impact to the country.

The magnitude of the situation is heighted with the thousands of fans cheering, and again that was made possible by the at bats leading up to Casey's. For baseball to gain popularity, many circumstances had to come together to allow for such rapid growth.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;

There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.

And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,

No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

This small gesture by Casey, the tip of his cap, is part of the tradition and charm of baseball (Bowen, 2014). The game's subtle elegance is a vital component to baseball. There is a humbling nature to a game in which excellence is defined by failing seven out of 10 times (Palmer, 2006). Also, there is a respect between the players and the fans; a beautiful symbiotic relationship in which each side is wholly dependent on the other for survival. Without great players, no fans would watch. And without fans to watch, no great players would emerge. There is an underlying trust that takes place in baseball, and the audacious applause can be acknowledged by a simple, silent tip of a cap.

Much like the interplay between fans and players, America and baseball were also linked in a symbiotic relationship. Without America, the game of baseball could never have existed in the fashion that it is known; and similarly, without baseball, America would be a different nation. The essence of America was shaped by the game of baseball.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;

Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.

Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,

Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

One theme throughout baseball lore is the idea that there is a distinct mental component to the game (Dorfman & Kuehl, 1995). Casey smiled and tipped his cap to the fans moments before, but when he stepped into the box, his demeanor changed. Through these mental components of the game, baseball itself transforms into a game of nuances. Baseball's roots began in the mid-1800s, but it was through the subtle nuanced changes of the game that ended up becoming the traditions of the game.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,

And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.

Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped-

"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

Casey took the first pitch, and it was a strike. This was the first blow to Casey. The first real "strike" to the game was in 1919 with the Black Sox Scandal. In a time when baseball was simply thriving, eight players on the Chicago White Sox were found to have intentionally thrown World Series games in exchange for money from gamblers (O'Hearn, 2007).

The perception of baseball as being the sport of purity was tarnished by this dark moment in baseball. In an article written in 1969, sports writer Charles Chamberlain wrote: "Of all the dark moments in sports, the throwing of the 1919 World Series by the Chicago White Sox to the Cincinnati Reds remains the darkest." It was not until nearly two years after the World Series that a grand jury was convened to investigate the situation. The trial took place in 1921, but the players were acquitted of all charges (Linder, 2010). However, Major League Baseball upheld their decision to ban each of the players for life regardless of the grand jury's decision.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,

Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.

"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;

And its likely they'd a-killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

Casey, like the game of baseball, admits when something is wrong. Baseball appointed Kenesaw Mountain Landis as the first Commissioner of Baseball prior to the 1921 season, a position that was made necessary by the Black Sox Scandal. “Regardless of the verdict of juries, no player who throws a ball game, no player who undertakes or promises to throw a ball game, no player who sits in confidence with a bunch of crooked ballplayers and gamblers, where the ways and means of throwing a game are discussed and does not promptly tell his club about it, will ever play professional baseball” (Phillips, 2012, p. 129). Landis’ decision was important for the game of baseball because it was a zero tolerance policy (Fairbanks, 2008). Undoubtedly, the game will always have to suffer setbacks because individuals will continue make mistakes. However, the Commissioner’s stern verdict helped to uphold the sanctity of the game, and allow baseball to give itself a different set of standards than other leagues and sports were used to.

Prior to the second pitch, Casey urges the pitcher to play on. This can be seen in the light of the 1919 Black Sox Scandal. Even though baseball had received a blow, the game wanted to push on. And when the game did continue, it wasn’t long before it was met with another setback.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;

He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;

He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;

But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike two."

Casey’s second strike was manifested in the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants moving to California. In 1958, the complexion of baseball changed when two of its oldest teams left their original residences in hopes of greater financial prosperity due to “declining attendance,

which (was) a result of obsolete facilities and metropolitan New York's saturation with televised baseball" (Sheehan, 1957). The Brooklyn Dodgers had been active since 1884, and the New York Giants since 1886. The news of the departures of both franchises devastated fans (Murphy, 2009). The concepts of tradition and ethical fiber seemed to dissipate with the overwhelming greed of team owners.

> "Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered fraud;
> But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
> They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
> And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

Although people from New York were stunned, the move also gave the game a chance to expand. Both California-based teams greatly profited by the move. The Brooklyn Dodgers drew an average of 13,354 attendees per game in the 1957 season, nearly 10 thousand fewer per game than their 1947 season (*Baseball-Almanac*). However, when they moved to Los Angeles, fans immediately supported the team. In their first season, the Los Angeles Dodgers set a franchise record of averaging 23,968 attendees per game and have continued to be one of the most consistently profitable franchises[2] over the past 50 years (*Baseball-Almanac*).

Similar to the Dodgers, the New York Giants showed a decline in attendance in the late 1950s. In their final season in New York, 1957, they drew just 8,493 attendees per game; that number was nearly doubled with their move to San Francisco in 1958, where they drew 15,711 per game (*Baseball-Almanac*). The ceiling for the Giants was not as great as it was for the

[2] *Forbes* (2015) notes that the Los Angeles Dodgers are worth a reported $2.4 billion dollars and have an average revenue of $403 million dollars, making them the second most profitable franchise in Major League Baseball (behind the New York Yankees) (Business of Baseball, 2015).

Dodgers, yet they were still above the Nation League average for their first nine seasons in San Francisco (*Baseball-Almanac*).

The choice to let the second pitch go for strike two had both pros and cons: perhaps there would be a better pitch for Casey to hit later in the at bat, or maybe he missed his chance already. The game of baseball decided to expand the game in the 1950s, and from a financial standpoint it has paid off. Both the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Francisco Giants have created their own traditions since 1958. Since their move to California, the two teams have eight World Series titles (five for the Dodgers and three for the Giants) and they both are among the top four most profitable teams in baseball according to a report by *Forbes* (Business of Baseball, 2015).

Even though Casey knew both called strikes were the correct calls, one to penalize the men who intentionally lost games and the other to move from New York to California for profit, he also knew the game was on the line now.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;

He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.

And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,

And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Casey's demeanor changes yet again for the third pitch. He already changed from having "a smile of Christian charity" to a "scornful look." And now, his teeth were "clenched in hate." The game of baseball maintains its internal poetry in its ease. Many of the greatest players of all time make the game look effortless. Yet, with Casey's anger, he separates himself with the beauty of the game and attempts to hit the ball with brute force.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;

The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,

And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;

But there is no joy in Mudville - mighty Casey has struck out.

In the final stanza of the poem Casey strikes out to end the game. The poet explains that people somewhere else may be happy, but not in Mudville, as the hope of victory is gone with the final swing. With the previous two called strikes, there was still a chance at a comeback. Each strike was a setback, but the game continued. However, the final strike marked the end of the game. For the game of baseball, the third "strike" was a literal strike. Although there were seven previous work stoppages in baseball history, the 1994 Major League Baseball Labor Strike was the only strike that resulted in a year without a World Series since 1904 (McCarron, 2014). The disagreement between the Players' Union and the Owners was focused on revenue (Staudohar, 1997). And the aftermath of the strike directly impacted total attendance across the league. 1993 garnered the highest attendance in Major League History to that point with over 70 million in total attendance (*Baseball-Almanac*). The first full season back, in 1995, the total attendance was down nearly 20 million patrons (*Baseball-Almanac*). In addition to the drop in attendance, there was also a significant decline in television profits (Rodriguez, Kesenne, & Garcia, 2013).

Yet the money was just one aspect of much larger issues. The disillusionment of fans permeated the game for years after the strike. There were a number of positive stories from the strike-shorted season that were prematurely stopped. In 1994, the Montreal Expos were having their best season in their franchise's history with a 74-40 record at the time of the strike; Ken Griffey, Jr., who led the league in voting for the All-Star game, hit 40 home runs by August 11th, and had a chance at breaking Roger Marris' record of 61 home runs in a season; and Tony Gywnn was batting .394 (.475 through the first 10 games in August) and was attempting to

become the first player to hit .400 since Ted Williams' mark in 1941. These three storylines, amongst many others, never materialized because of the labor strike. Perhaps the Expos would have never left Montreal if they somehow won the World Series that year. Or maybe the coveted home run record would have been Griffey, Jr.'s to hold. Or perhaps Gwynn could have been just the 14th player to hit .400 or better since 1900. But those storylines were taken from fans just as they were unfolding. Fans who put their hearts into the game had them broken overnight.

America's pastime would forever be tainted. In addition to these three strikes, baseball has also tolerated many other dark days, but none quiet like this. It was not the day of the labor strike, but instead was September 14, 1994 that was baseball's darkest day: the day Major League Baseball announced the cancelation of the 1994 World Series.

Each one of the three pitches that helped to strike out baseball could be connected with one commonality: greed. It was the greed of the players and the gamblers who caused players to intentionally lose games in a World Series. It was the greed of the owners who caused New York to lose two of its most storied franchises. And it was the greed of the players and the owners in 1994 that inevitably resulted with the strike. As the focus shifts from the game to greed, the way in which the game is perceived is different.

For over a century, the core rules of the game have stayed the same, but the game continues to change. Fans will still hope and root for their team's version of Casey, and the fans will be crushed each time he strikes out. But one key aspect of "Casey at the Bat" that often goes overlooked is the fact that it is just one game. The narrator does not tell the audience if it is a game in April or a World Series game in October. Even if it was the worst case and it was the final game of the season, Casey will still play another day. After the worst of strike outs, great players will still come back again. Baseball is a game about dealing with failure more than it is

about regular success. It is about finding a way to come back up to the plate after the greatest knockdowns.

Grantland Rice wrote "Casey's Revenge" [3] in 1907, a sequel to "Casey at the Bat." In this poem, "Casey hit the ball." Another author decided to take up the tradition and rejuvenate the hope of baseball in the form of Casey. This is the same way that the game has always reacted to adversity throughout its history, by coming back up for another at bat.

After the Black Sox Scandal, the first Commissioner of baseball stepped in to reestablish order; after the move to California baseball fans scurried to the stadiums in droves to show their support; and after the devastating 1994 strike, the game found new ways of rejuvenation and continue to raise attendance.

Since the strike-shorted season, the game has undergone more drastic changes than it did in the century leading up to it. In many ways, these changes have been in response to the Major League Baseball Strike of 1994. Just as Rice wanted to give Casey a new ending, many others still wanted to give the game of baseball another at bat. These changes did not occur to revise history or to attempt to forget its transgressions. Instead, these changes helped to claim the game's faults, and move on as a stronger game for having endured them.

The current state of baseball has come to another crossroads, another at bat for Casey. So, what would it look like if Casey had another at bat today? By looking to the past and understanding baseball's biggest flaws, would he be able to make the necessary adjustments to have a different outcome? This project asks: What would it be like if Casey did, in fact, have another opportunity to come to bat?

[3] The entire poem can viewed in Appendix B.

Specifically, this project will identify three major changes in baseball since the strike of 1994 that are still impacting the game today. The three-pitch approach will view three of the most important changes in the game of baseball over the past 20 years, and attempt to provide a methodology in which the game can use to react and preserve its traditions. My aim is not to announce that these changes have been for better or for worse for baseball. Rather this project will attempt to identify these changes and ask the question: where does baseball go to preserve its soul? Tradition can only exist if the thread of the game is preserved along with it.

To frame this project, Casey will have a new, imaginary at bat in which he will have three new opportunities to change his fate. Each of the three changes has occurred since the strike in 1994, and each was championed by a different entity. The first change occurred when Major League Baseball players knowingly took steroids, the second change came when fans, evaluators, and analysts began to favor advanced metrics instead of traditional metrics, and the third change came when the league introduced new technologies into the game, specifically the implementation of instant reply. Each one of these actions has dramatically changed the game of baseball. How the game will ultimately react to these changes will undoubtedly shape its future.

The first attempt to reclaim the game's place in American hearts was by its players. The use of performance-enhancing drugs was first documented in the 1970s, but became an epidemic in the 1990s (Lavine, 2013). Although steroids were used prior to the strike, wide-spread use came after the baseball strike in 1994. One of the direct impacts steroids had on the game was the inflation of power figure, namely the home run. Even the most disgruntled of fans could not help but to look in the newspaper each morning in the summer of 1998 to see how close Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa were to breaking Marris' record of 61 home runs in a season (Chass, 1998).

Steroid use in baseball is yet another black cloud over the game's storied history. Many viewers would see this as another greedy act on the part of individuals. Although intent and rationale can never be truly uncovered, there is little doubt that the summer of '98 helped to reinvigorate the popularity of the game (Chass, 1998). The motive is irrelevant to this project; the outcome, rather, is what is connected to baseball. In a time of peril, baseball was able to not only overcome, but also thrive after the strike due to the steroid-enhanced statistics of the game.

This is in no way condoning, overlooking, or accepting the actions of those who used performance-enhancing drugs. Steroid users cheapened records, cheated the game, and moved baseball even further away from its idealized past. Yet, regardless of this fact, the Steroid Era did bring people back to the parks (Thornton, et. al., 2012). Although it brought skepticism and scandal with it, the Steroid Era did help the game to stay afloat in a time of volatility.

The Steroid Era had a number of casualties. One such impact was that it changed the way fans, evaluators, and analysts viewed statistics and records. It brought an ethical component to the way a player was valued. And it also caused people who romanticized the game to become disenchanted.

One of the best ways to disassociate from the romantic side of the game is to focus on the technical and the scientific ends. In 1994, David Grabiner wrote "The Sabermetric Manifesto." Sabermetrics is the empirical analysis of baseball, especially baseball statistics, which measure in-game activity (Lewis, 2003). Although scientific research had begun much earlier,[4] the legitimacy of the field of sabermetrics did not find its way into the public eye until Michael Lewis' 2003 book *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*. The book was later made into a blockbuster movie shortened to *Moneyball*. The book is a detailed look at how those who

[4] Earnshaw Cook wrote *Percentage Baseball* in 1964 in which details metrics far beyond what others would consider to be traditional statistics.

evaluated baseball for a century over-valued subjective aspects of the game that could not be measured by numbers. Lewis details how the age of analytical research changed the actual value of players.

The case study in Lewis' text is the Oakland Athletics who found success by implementing statistical analysis that was contrary to conventional baseball wisdom (2003). After the heightened popularity of sabermetrics, most major league baseball teams have adopted its philosophies in varying degrees (Woodrum, 2012). The findings of imperial research have shown that analytical analysis does help to evaluate talent. However, that is not all that it does.

Baseball was once a game whose players were revered for their athletic abilities, their unforgettable performances, and their actions on and off the field. Some of the game's all-time great players such as Roberto Clemente, a humanitarian who died in a plane accident while flying to deliver aid to earthquake victims in Nicaragua (Maraniss, 2006), and Jackie Robinson, the man who broke baseball's color barrier with grace and professionalism, meant more to the game for their work off the diamond (Rampersad, 1998).

Additionally, there are still aspects of the game that cannot be quantified on a stat sheet: a right fielder throwing a perfect strike to the plate and holding a runner at third; a pitcher throwing on short rest because he gives his team the best chance to win; or an injured player coming off the bench to pinch hit. These are all part of the game, and things that the people watching can see, but are never recorded by statistics. And then there are the aspects of the game that do not impact the outcome, but do make an impression on the game and its fans: a tip of the cap to the crowd; giving an umpire a few seconds to catch his breath after a foul ball hits him in the chest; or simply running out every ground out, day in and day out, regardless of the inning, score, or month.

Fans of the game were crushed by the steroid scandal. Overnight players changed from heroes to cheats. People felt betrayed as baseball giants were found out to be disrespecting the game, inflating their statistics, and taking away the beauty from the game. Perhaps advanced metrics allowed for people to stay connected to the game without necessarily identifying with the players as people, but instead understand them through numbers.

Statistical analysis would have impacted the game regardless of the Steroid Era. But its prevalence may not have been so great if fans did not feel like the players had turned their backs on them. Many fans walked away from the game forever after the outbreak of steroids in baseball. But for those who stayed, it was easier to look at numbers on a sheet to decide who was a great ball player rather than looking at a man in a jersey. Scouts and fans alike no longer had to look at a player to determine whether or not he was good, because the numbers on the spreadsheets told the only story worth listening to, the only story that wasn't lying to them.

It was the wide-spread acceptance of sabermetrics (Baumer & Zimbalist, 2014) that proves this point. There are baseball insiders who still believe there is more to a player than the statistics, but the game's more analytical statistics are being acknowledged as fact instead of merely as a piece of the story. Those who are opposed to sabermetrics are the ones who are outcasts in today's game.[5] Such a stark change could have happened for one of two reasons: 1.) the newly developed statistics are so obviously superior that using old statistics seem archaic or 2.) the baseball community needed to find a way to continue to enjoy the game without having to associate with its players as closely. Sabermatricians will resoundingly choose the former, while this project would like to further investigate the latter.

[5] One example of traditionalist being seen as outcasts is Play-by-play announcer, Hawk Harrelson, who is a known opponent to sabermetrics. Due to his disposition on advanced metrics, writes, "Harrelson is a remnant of the past, a man meant for a museum not a broadcasting booth" (Horrow, 2013).

There is validity to sabermetric study, and there is a place for statistical analysis in the game. However, it is my contention that the goal of sabermetrics, "the search for objective knowledge about baseball" (James, 1986), undermines the fabric of the game. Baseball is inherently subjective; the game creates debates, it does not end them with statistical proofs. Additionally, the game of baseball is made up of people, not just the statistics. Baseball has produced great characters like Yogi Berra, emotional storylines like Lou Gehrig's speech,[6] and tall-tales like whether or not Babe Ruth called his shot to hit a home run in the 1932 World Series. The charm of baseball, tightly knit with America's history, is about baseball lore and the experiences fans have with the game.

For a game that maintained the majority of its rules for a century, the 21st century has already piled up a number of new wrinkles to the game. The players took steroids, which helped to resurrect the game after the strike, the fans, evaluators, and analysts turned to statistics because numbers on a sheet are not going to break their hearts, and then the league itself stepped in to help keep the game thriving. Some of the ongoing changes the league has been making have been the implementation of instant replay and various forms of technology in the game. Unlike the other major sports that adopted instant replay sooner (National Football League 1986; National Hockey League 1991; National Basketball Association 2002), Major League Baseball did not officially use any form of instant replay until 2008 (Curry, 2008). The other major American sport leagues had all successfully employed reply in some fashion, and each of the three sports had been met with positive results.

[6] On July 4, 1939, Lou Gehrig made a speech in Yankee Stadium when being honored for his retirement. Gehrig was forced into retirement after being diagnosed with ALS, later called Lou Gehrig's Disease. His "Luckiest man of the face of the earth" speech is one of the most emotional speeches in American history, and has been referred to as "baseball's Gettysburg Address" (Wulf, 2014).

For years prior to its inception, many believed that replay belonged in the game. The overwhelming majority believed that baseball should use the available tools, just like the other major sports had, to take away part of the human element if it meant getting the calls "right." But rule changes should not be about popularity, they should be about what is best for the game. Technology would have likely found its way in to the game at some point, yet the recent additions of instant replay have come on so quickly that it is causing people to pause for reflection: is this in the betterment of the game? The current state of baseball is once again volatile, and it is has been long predicted that baseball will continue to fall away from American hearts as other sports, in addition to football, will be become more popular (Hilaire, 2010).

Major League Baseball is attempting to cling on to its existing fans, gain a new fan base from a new generation of fans, and also set itself up for long-term success. To do this, baseball must have an eye on the past as well as one on the future. Simultaneously, baseball must find ways to look back and look forward to attract fans in the present, all while attending to the present historical moment.

The original three strikes to Casey were products of greed. Yet, under these new circumstances, Casey is seeing three different pitches. This is like he is seeing a fastball, a curve ball, and a slider. In this imaginary at bat, Casey will have to make adjustments from pitch to pitch. The three metaphorical strikes are all linked to the way in which different entities attempt to address the historical issues. The players, the fans, evaluators, analysts, and the league are all desperate to change the game. Despite the fact that they are totally separate responses, there is one theme that seems to prevail: each is a step away from the human element.

Steroid users chose to find synthetic ways to become better athletes. Sabermatricians chose to look at stat sheets instead of people. And the league chose to trust technology over

trained professionals. In a way, each of these responses is pulling the game further apart from its tradition, pulling on the thread that can ultimately unravel the ball that holds the game together. The question then becomes simple: is the game's tradition worth protecting?

The aftermath of these effects, then, is the true concern of this project. After Casey's strike out in Thayer's original poem, it was "Casey's Revenge" that allowed the Mudville hero to take another at bat. Similarly, this project dares to ask what it would look like if Casey had another opportunity to come to bat. The outcome could resemble Casey's first attempt where he struck out or perhaps Casey would have another chance to hit the ball as he did in his revenge.

The difference between Casey's original at bat and an at bat today will be that those pitches have already impacted baseball and have taken their tolls. Even though there may be some residual effects, the majority of the fallout has already taken place. In contrast, the three pitches that Casey sees in this imaginary at bat are much fresher wounds. These changes to the game are ongoing, and are very much a part of the present game of baseball. Thus, the approach in which Casey takes at the plate can affect the future of the game.

Baseball's future is in a perpetual state of flux. While many of the rules have stayed the same, the game's recent drastic changes urge for active participants to look back at baseball's history and attempt to guide baseball toward a future that will hold values of its past. The question of which values to hold on to and which to dismiss becomes paramount for the future of the game. Arnett, Fritz, and Bell content that communication ethics derive from what one protects and promotes (2009). Baseball, then, must decide what to protect and promote to remain sustainable. More than finding a profitable future for the game, a communication ethics approach to baseball would require looking at the essence of the game itself, and preserve essential

nuances of the game that helped to define baseball. As baseball moves further away from the human element, those with a good eye must identify what will be lost in the name of progress.

The changes to the game ultimately question the need for the game's tradition. And, as the game moves away from its traditions, it loses its common center. Arnett introduces the idea of existential homelessness, a moment that emerges when common centers are lost. In an era without agreed upon principles, individuals often mistrust others and are led to a survival mentality (Arnett, 2003, p. 232). Additionally, a loss of common centers causes a lack of ground, a meeting place for discussion to occur: "Left with no common center or moral story to offer a beginning for conversation, a person can lose a sense of direction" (p. 233). For baseball to have a prosperous future it must have direction towards its intended goal; without such direction, the game will lose its connection to the past altogether.

Contrasting narratives challenge baseball tradition, but that is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, disagreement on the direction of baseball can be fruitful. "However, for the disagreement to be meaningful there needs to be agreement on a common center" (p. 231). Without a place for conversation to occur, the survivalist and individualist mentality of existential homelessness will undoubtedly take precedence over the good of the game. This is to say that there needs to be a meeting place, a place for meaningful conversation to take place, for the future of baseball.

This project's philosophical home will be represented in the attempt to reconcile opposing views of the good and find the direction to a positive future for baseball. To do so, there must be an underlying trust that a conversation can take place amongst the different sides. A collaboration of ideas from varying perspectives can help to identify various possibilities. After all, learning is the pragmatic good in a time of difference (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2009, p. 211).

Much like Casey's original at bat in Thayer's poem, he will once again see three pitches and have three more opportunities to be the hero for Mudville. The three identified changes in baseball will represent the three pitches: the use of performance-enhancing drugs in baseball, the promotion of analytical research in the evaluation of baseball, and the implementation of technology in the game of baseball. Casey will have an opportunity to succeed against each of these three "pitches."

This project will cover a total of four distinct sections: the use of performance-enhancing drugs in baseball, the promotion of analytical research in the evaluation of baseball, the implementation of new technology such as instant replay in the game of baseball, and the overarching affects of each of these three changes to the game along with a detailed analysis of how the game can preserve its tradition, find its direction, and secure its future. All of this work will be in the hope that Casey can find a way to not only hit the ball, but instead to hit a home run and win the game for his team and for all of baseball.

Chapter II: A Communication Ethics Response to Steroids and Other Performance-Enhancing Drugs in Baseball

There have been many times throughout baseball history in which the game was no longer a niche entertainment interest. Instead it was something that the entire country could identify with. The summer of 1998 rejuvenated the game and seemed to wash away the issues surrounding baseball after the strike-shorted season in 1994. In addition to 13 different players hitting at least 40 home runs, three different players driving in 150 runs, Alex Rodriguez becoming just the 3rd player ever to have at least 40 home runs and 40 steals in the same season,[7] and the game producing four pitchers with 20 or more wins, the summer was actually focused around one long-standing record: the single-season home run record. Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa would both eventually break Roger Maris' home run record of 61 home runs that had stood since 1961 (*FanGraphs*).

The 1998 season catapulted baseball back into the hearts of millions as one of the game's most revered records was being challenged. But the revitalization of the game was short-lived. "The Mitchell Report" was first published on December 13, 2007. The report was the culmination of a 21-month investigation of anabolic steroid use in Major League Baseball. Most importantly, the report named 89 Major League Baseball players who were alleged to have used steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs (Mitchell, 2007). What was thought to be the homerun era was now the Steroid Era, and it was as if the public saw behind the curtain to find out the magic was not what it seemed.

Although many who followed the game were aware of the presence of illegal substances in baseball, few had any idea of the extent to which performance-enhancing drugs pervaded the

[7] Alfonso Soriano became the 4th player to accomplish the feat in 2006 (*FanGraphs*).

game. “The Mitchell Report” had a profound effect on the league, and its impact was felt immediately. The sheer number of players incriminated was shocking to many, especially when finding out that some of the game’s brightest stars were on the list. Overnight, heroes became villains and a greater divide was separating the present game with its idealized past. The steroid outbreak, then, can be seen as the first pitch for Casey in his next at bat.

In addition to its impact on the game of baseball, the Steroid Era called into question ethical practices of the game’s participants including players, owners, coaches, trainers, and all others who knowingly participated or those who knew and did nothing to stop it from occurring. This is why it is imperative to understand the findings from “The Mitchell Report” and use a communication ethics response to adequately deal with its issues. In some ways this can be linked to the 1919 Black Sox Scandal insofar that it called the character of the league’s players into question.

Due to the magnitude of “The Mitchell Report” and the inordinate number of players being linked to steroids, it begs the question: how did the baseball allow this to happen? This portion of the project will cover five distinct sections: 1. The conditions in which permitted such widespread use of illegal substances; 2. Instances of performance-enhancing drugs in baseball before the publication of “The Mitchell Report;” 3. A detailed review of “The Mitchell Report;” 4. The immediate fallout of “The Mitchell Report” and the ongoing skepticism of performance-enhancing drugs in today’s game; and 5. The issues that remain after “The Mitchell Report.”

The Game Conditions

When looking back to 2007, the Steroid Era seems almost unthinkable. Steroids were a part of the game, and few were totally taken aback by that fact. But the number of players linked to steroids and, perhaps more importantly, the number of truly great players linked to steroids

shaped the way the public received Mitchell's message. Although the 1919 World Series was thrown by a small group of people, the entire White Sox team did not intentionally lose the World Series, only eight men did. The biggest difference between the 1919 World Series and the Steroid Era is scope: the number of players who knowingly took performance-enhancing substances and the others including players, coaches, managers, owners, and executives, who knew about it and did nothing. "'The Mitchell Report' permeated the clubhouses of every one of baseball's 30 teams" (Thompson & O'Keeffe, 2007). No organization was unaffected by the report; the findings hurt each team and the baseball community as a whole.

So many pieces had to fall in place simultaneously for such egregious acts to go undisciplined. The perfect storm of fear, technology, and a league that thought it was untouchable came together shortly after the strike of 1994. The fear was in the fact that the strike of 1994 did occur and did impact overall attendance. The highest attended season in baseball history was in 1993 (over 70 million patrons), and that was not recaptured again until 1998 (Lindholm, 2015). Although attendance rose from 1996 to 1997, many were still skeptical if baseball could regain its core fan base. After the strike, it was clear that the league wanted things to run as smoothly as possible. An outbreak of steroids in the years immediately following the strike may have impacted baseball significantly. Rather than highlighting another contentious topic like the strike did, the focus could be on positive stories like the chance to break a home run record held for more than 25 years. Then, one must understand that steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs were not always available. Anabolic steroids were used by bodybuilders in the last 1940s and early 1950s, and there are reports of steroids reaching the NFL as early in the 1960s (Baker, 2011), but the technology was refining itself, the products were becoming more stabilized, and the opportunities to take steroids were abundant by the

1990s. As the drugs themselves became better, stronger, and safer, more players were willing to take them. Finally, the game felt it was untouchable. This includes the players, the owners, and the league itself. Players did not fear repercussions, the owners seemingly did not care about unethical practices as long as attendance was rising, and the league continued to grow. These conditions combine at the same time to cultivate a culture without a moral code, and without that frame of reference, the game allowed a steroid epidemic.

Performance-enhancing[8] drugs had been creeping into the game since the 1980s with amphetamines, but steroid use was not yet apparent. In 1991, the commissioner Fay Vincent circulated a memo including the following:

> There is no place for illegal drugs in baseball. Their use by players and others in baseball can neither be condoned nor tolerated. Baseball players and personnel cannot be permitted to give even the slightest suggestion that illegal drug use is either acceptable or safe. It is the responsibility of all baseball players and personnel to see to it that the use of illegal drugs does not occur, and if it does, to put a stop to it. (Francis T. (Fay) Vincent Jr., 2009)

At the time, Vincent did not consider steroids to be a major problem in the game, but his proactive approach was to lay the groundwork for an attempt to control the entire drug and potential steroid problem. However, Vincent vastly underestimated the issue.

The actual Steroid Era does not have a defined time frame, though ESPN mentions "it is generally considered to have run from the late '80s through the late 2000s" ("The Steroids Era,"

[8] Mitchell's report uses the term anabolic steroids, and many refer to the time in which players were using illegal drugs as the Steroid Era. However, over time there were varying forms of illegal drugs that were similar to anabolic steroids, but not technically steroids. Performance-Enhancing Drugs (PEDs) is the current term used to encompass steroids as well as illegal drugs other than anabolic steroids.

2012). While steroid usage did begin prior to the strike, the surge in player's statistics was not as stark as they were in the mid-to-late 1990s and the 2000s. For example, there have only been 43 instances in MLB history where a player has hit 50 or more home runs in a season; 17 of those occurred before 1990, 24 occurred between 1990 and 2007,[9] and two have occurred since 2010 (*FanGraphs*). Of that list of 24, Bonds, McGwire, Sosa, and Rodriguez, four of the players most regularly associated with steroids, make up 12 of the instances. Although an individual player's performance may or may not be tied to the Steroid Era, the staggering numbers leave little doubt. The fact that over half of the 50+ home run seasons happened to occur during an 18-year span that clearly coincides with the Steroid Era speaks volumes. This is especially unique when one considers that the league has been around for over a century.

There is little debate that steroids did impact the game,[10] but the numbers alone do not explain why these players were not disciplined before having these historic statistical seasons. Additionally, even if players were not penalized at first, after the sport had seen such dramatic increases in power and steroids were suspected, why didn't the league and the Player's Union take steroids more seriously?

Much of the landscape, again, goes back to the baseball strike in 1994. When baseball resumed in 1995, it was in an extremely volatile state. An expert in sports law at Albany Law School commented on the strike: "It was terrible. It almost destroyed baseball. If you are a baseball fan, a summer without baseball is a year without a summer" (Shapiro, 2009). So, when baseball did return from the strike, it seemed like the focus of attention was on assuaging the strife between the Player's Union and the management instead of the worrying about an issue

[9] Appendix C is a visual graphic of the 24 players to hit 50 home runs or more in a season between 1990 and 2007.
[10] Appendix D is a visual graphic of home runs and isolated power from 1980-2015 to highlight the spike of the Steroid Era.

such as steroids; especially when few had any idea to the extent of steroids in the sport. The league seemed to be more concerned with attendance and re-establishing baseball than re-establishing order. In a *New York Times* article in 2008, William C. Rhoden establishes the unproven, but common theory: "The story line goes that baseball, reveling in the economics of its revitalization, looked the other way as players grew bigger and stronger, as home runs soared and turnstiles whirred." His article, "Executives Must Answer for Steroids," asks a fundamental question: "Who knew what, when?" Rhoden, like so many fans of the game, wants answers as to how such a travesty could occur.

Allan Huber "Bud" Selig took over as acting commissioner of Major League Baseball in 1992 and then was named the official commissioner in 1998 until he stepped down in January of 2015. As his tenure aligned with both the baseball strike and the Steroid Era, he was often the focus of critical scrutiny. He responded to the allegations that "baseball turned a blind eye to steroids use in the late 1990s because hulking home run hitters like (Barry) Bonds, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa were boosting attendance and making profits for owners" (Pennington, 2007). Selig simply stated that it was "a myth," and suggested that the blame should also be shared with the Player's Union who fought against drug testing players and the players themselves who actually took the steroids. Even after Vincent's memo in 1991, a formal drug policy was not in place until 2002, and then players were not yet subject to penalties. In fact, in 2005, a first offense for a positive drug test resulted in a 10-day suspension, and it would take five violations to be subjected to discipline by the commissioner ("A Timeline," 2014). Beginning in 2014, a first time violation would result in an 80-game suspension, followed by a 162-game suspension for a second offense.

The lack of any substantial punishment prior to November of 2005 (where a player would serve a 50-game suspension) allowed players to experiment with performance-enhancing substances without any legitimate consequences from the league. In fact, until the mid-2000s, the players were the group that was most overlooked. The reactions often pointed to the league and the owners for not establishing better policies, and others criticized the Player's Union for blindly protecting their players. One reason may have been because while people knew steroids were a problem, people were not sure exactly sure which players took steroids. Prior to "The Mitchell Report," the idea of steroids seemed abstract to many people; the actual names on a piece of paper made the case much realer. Black ink on white paper: these were the men who deserve to be blamed. But this is not to say that people did not know who the users were long before 2007. In fact, fans and writers alike pointed to the steroid problem long before Mitchell's publication.

Bob Nightengale, *Los Angeles Times* Staff Writer, expressed concerns about steroids becoming an issue in baseball in his article published on July 15, 1995. He uses quotes from general managers and players who openly talk about steroids in baseball. Randy Smith, the general manager at the time for the San Diego Padres, said "We all know there's steroid use, and it's definitely become more prevalent…I think 10%-20% (of the players are using steroids)...No one has any hard-core proof, but there's a lot of guys you suspect" (Nightengale, 1995). Even future Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn[11] said, "It's like the big secret we're not supposed to talk about, but believe me, we wonder just like the rest of people. I'm standing out there in the outfield when a guy comes up, and I'm thinking, 'Hey, I wonder if this guy is on steroids'" (1995). Nearly 10 years before significant penalties would be implemented for steroid users and

[11] Gwynn was elected into the Hall of Fame in 2007, his first year of eligibility.

12 years before Mitchell's findings, there were open discussions about steroid use in the game. By July of 1995, Tony Gwynn had 11 All-Star appearances and five batting titles under his belt (*Baseball-Reference*). These comments were not made by a bench player or a minor league player few people knew; Gwynn was one of the most well-respected and well-liked players in all of baseball. A person of his character talking with the press about steroid suspicions in baseball would seem to indicate that something would have been done, but instead the focus was set on baseball's comeback, and few cared to mention the issue that would later cast more dark days over the game.

Nightengale also notes in his article that Bub Selig said that, in a private meeting, the owners addressed the steroid issue but "the conclusion was that no one had any evidence that steroid use should be a concern" (1995). Additionally, he notes "The Major League Players Assn., which prohibits random drug testing for any non-drug offender at the major league level, said steroids testing would violate individual rights" (1995). It seemed as though all parties involved clung to some type of reason why steroid testing could not work, but perhaps the real issue was that baseball did not want a drug testing policy. Instead baseball wanted long home runs, happy fans, and full stadiums. Steroids were not hidden, and it was not really ever a secret. Yet, with a combination of ambivalence and ignorance, the issue continued to snowball into something much greater that the game ever expected. Perhaps if the game had implemented better policies when the first warning signs arose, there would be no Steroid Era to speak about. Regardless of where the blame should be placed, the fact that players and managers were openly talking about the issue in the summer of 1995, the first year back from the strike, but the league did nothing to address the suspicions is, at the very least, somewhat incriminating. There should have been more respect for the game than to allow this to continue.

Instances of Performance-Enhancing Drugs in Baseball Before "The Mitchell Report"

Mitchell was not the first to break steroid stories. In fact, many others before him discussed the issue. In 2005 ex-player Jose Canseco wrote a book entitled *Juiced: Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits & How Baseball Got Big*. In the book, Canseco admits to his own steroid use and also names multiple teammates as steroid users including Mark McGwire, Juan González, Rafael Palmeiro, Ivan Rodriguez, and Jason Giambi. This group of players is not irrelevant either. Based on statistics alone, Mark McGwire and Rafael Palmeiro were both destined for the Hall of Fame. Canseco, Rodriguez, and Giambi each won an MVP and Gonzalez won two. Although Canseco certainly caused a stir with his book, many people did not accept his accusations. After all, the book was a first person narrative of his experiences in baseball. There was no proof to his claims; in fact, many refuted his claims were even true ("Who's lying now," 2010).

For baseball to take action, they needed to have more substantial proof. The months leading up to Mitchell's investigation were driven heavily by the rumors and the stories about steroids in the game. One of the most famous pieces of writing that helped to shape baseball's future was Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams' bestselling non-fiction book *Game of Shadows: Barry Bonds, BALCO, and the Steroids Scandal that Rocked Professional Sports*.

In 2002, a scandal emerged involving banned substances and their uses by professional athletes in The Bay Area Laboratory Co-operative (BALCO). Most notably, the BALCO scandal incriminated Barry Bonds, one of the best, if not the best, player in the game at that time.[12] In 2001, Bonds broke McGwire's single-season home run record (70) by hitting 73 home runs, a year in which began his streak of four consecutive MVP awards. Bonds is the only player with

[12] Bonds ranks first in home runs (762), first in walks (2558), second only to Babe Ruth in WAR (164.4), and first in number of MVP Awards (7) (*FanGraphs*).

four consecutive MVP awards in baseball history; in fact, no other player has received more than three in a career, making Bonds' seven MVP awards so remarkable.

The book, *Game of Shadows*, emerged from the BALCO scandal. After over 200 interviews unredacted versions of affidavits filed by the Balco investigators, the authors found substantial ground to support their book's major thrust: to uncover the truth about Bonds' steroid use. It is referenced that the Commissioner of Baseball at the time, Bud Selig, moved forward with appointing Mitchell and green lighting the investigation after reading *Game of Shadows* (Mitchell, 2007, p. SR-17).

"The Mitchell Report"

"The Report to the Commissioner of Baseball of an Independent Investigation into the Illegal Use of Steroids and Other Performance Enhancing Substances by Players in Major League Baseball," is the full report title of what is otherwise known as "The Mitchell Report." George J. Mitchell, former Democratic United States Senator, was appointed by Commissioner of Baseball, Bud Selig, in March of 2006 to conduct an investigation into the use of performance-enhancing drugs in the league (Wilson & Schmidt, 2007). The report is the culmination of the findings of Mitchell's investigation on performance-enhancing drugs in baseball (2007).

The electronic version of "The Mitchell Report" is a 409-page document dated December 13, 2007 detailing the illegal use of steroids and other performance-enhancing substances by players in Major League Baseball. The report is broken down into 12 different chapters, each section with varying lengths. Chapter VIII details the actual substance abuse by players and makes up nearly 100 pages of text; it is important to note that this is a large piece of the overall text.

Chapter I of "The Mitchell Report" covers the "Scope of the Investigation," Mitchell's own role, the role of the Commissioner, and the language of the contract he signed to perform the independent investigation. "The Mitchell Report" is "highly critical of the commissioner's office and the players' union for tolerating the presence of drugs throughout years of abuse" (Wilson & Schmidt, 2007). Additionally, even though Selig hired and paid for the investigation, many of Mitchell's findings were sharp criticism of the commissioner, proving "Mitchell's claim of independence in this endeavor" (Wilson & Schmidt, 2007). Mitchell's independent investigation is one of the most important aspects of the investigation. Mitchell is acting as a professional third-party without any personal interests. Additionally, Mitchell explains that this investigation was not against the collective bargaining agreement between the thirty major league clubs and the Players Association because the Commissioner cited that this was in the "best interests of baseball" provision (Mitchell, 2007, p. 3). This is critical because many questioned how this investigation could have been legally performed at all.

Chapter II deals with the health risks from abuse of steroids, the threat to integrity, and the effects on young athletes. This chapter acts as a blanket to cover steroid-use across sports and leagues to understand the problem that exists outside of Major League Baseball. The aim of this chapter is to show how steroids are impacting people outside of baseball, and the health risks that are at stake for those who take steroids.

Mitchell then gives an historical review of steroids in the next few chapters. First, in Chapter III, he explains the history of MLB's drug policies over the years and their augmentations, then, in Chapter IV, he highlights some of the early uses of steroids in baseball (1988 to August 1998). The next section, Chapter V, discusses Androstenedione, "a steroid hormone produced in the body, where it is converted into testosterone" (Mitchell, 2007, p. 77).

The growing awareness of this drug was brought to light when Mark McGwire had a bottle of "andro" in his locker during the season he was chasing Roger Maris' homerun record. McGwire openly admitted to taking the substance and that it was not a banned substance according to Major League Baseball (p. 78). Mark McGwire's link to steroids is one of Mitchell's most important findings due to his connection with breaking Maris' record.

In Chapter VI, Mitchell reviews all of the public cases of players being caught with steroids as well as some of the unreported incidences. It is in this section where Mitchell seems to question the process of drug testing.

> …over 25 players who were implicated in the potential use of illegal drugs were subjected to informal "reasonable cause" drug testing for performance enhancing substances. The tests – when they occurred – were administered only after extended negotiations with the Players Association, a process that virtually guaranteed a negative test result. No major league player ever tested positive for steroids or any other performance enhancing substance in any of these tests. (p. 86)

The incidences in this section are primarily made up of cases where a player had illegal substances in his possession. This was much easier to prove, and also easier to punish. Mitchell indicates that the process in which took place was outdated and easily circumvented by players.

"Major League Baseball and the BALCO Investigation" is the title of Chapter VII. The chapter reviews the Bay Area Laboratory Cooperative in Burlingame, California raid by law enforcement officers in 2003 as part of an investigation into allegations that professional athletes were "illegally receiving anabolic steroids and other athletic performance-enhancing drugs and having their steroid intake monitored by persons associated with BALCO" (p. 112). Since this

was the case that led to Mitchell's investigation, there was significant detail on the outcomes to individuals who were linked to BALCO.

In this portion of the document, Mitchell details the history of the BALCO investigation. After cooperation from the Owner and President of BALCO, Victor Conte, and Vice President, Jim Valente, investigators had more difficulty with Greg Anderson, personal trainer of Barry Bonds. Anderson refused to testify before a grand jury and was held in contempt of the court and served prison time (Williams & Farinaru-Wada, 2006). "On July 16, 2005, Anderson pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute steroids and one count of money laundering" (Mitchell, 2007, p. 127). By admitting guilt, Anderson was seen as the first major domino to fall in the investigation.

Many people associated with BALCO were charged for infractions and served punishments. However, the federal court, not Major League Baseball, gave the punishments. In fact, Major League Baseball only implemented their formal steroid policy after the BALCO investigations, meaning admitted users suffered no consequence from the league ("Steroid Suspensions," 2014). This was a major issue for the game. Now, even if a player who was linked to BALCO were to be caught, Major League Baseball would not punish that player.

Mitchell requested interviews and was refused by most of the major league players implicated, except Jason Giambi and Randy Velarde, and all of the "persons believed to have knowledge of BALCO" had been publicity linked to BALCO (Mitchell, 2007, p. 121). Many people were hesitant to talk with the person who would be in charge of blowing the whistle on over a decade of steroid use. The final section of this chapter is a detailed account of the eight players linked to BALCO and an overview of each player's involvement.

The first seven chapters of the document are focused on the overview, the dangers, and the known uses of steroids and other performance enhancing drugs in MLB. Beginning with Chapter XIII, Mitchell begins to produce his original findings.

The most referenced chapter in the book is Chapter XIII due to its connection to Major League Baseball players, most of whom were not known steroid users prior to the publication of the report. The chapter is titled "Information Obtained Regarding Other Players' Possession or Use of Steroids and Human Growth Hormone."

In December of 2005, "federal law enforcement agents executed a search warrant at the home of Kirk Radomski" (p. 138). Radomski, a personal trainer and former employee of the New York Mets, admitted to distribution of anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, and clenbuterol to "dozens" of Major League Baseball players and associates (p. 139). Radomski "signed a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office, in which he agreed to plead guilty to one count of distribution of anabolic steroids and one count of money laundering" (p. 138). The agreement required Radomski to cooperate with the U.S. Attorney's Office with a truthful and full statement of his guilt along with naming the Major League Baseball players involved (p. 139). Using Radomski as the primary source for the material, Mitchell details a list of his findings including tangible evidence to link players with illegal substances. In many cases, Mitchell gives a brief explanation of Radomski's connection with a particular athlete and then shows checks made out to Radomski for various performance-enhancing supplements. There are also other sections provided by former minor league players and major league players including Todd Seyler, Matt Karchner, and Daniel Naulty. In each instance, Mitchell has first-hand testimonies to incriminate steroid-users. Both Karchner and Naulty admitted to taking steroids themselves.

In addition to simply naming steroid users, the reason Chapter XIII is so vital to the legitimacy of Mitchell's project is that he has substantial evidence against each and every player named in the book. Instead of relying on faulty sources or one-off instances, Mitchell sticks to players who can be proven to have used steroids; each player listed has at least two confirmed connections to steroids in some way.

In Chapter IX, Mitchell takes a different perspective and looks at the organized threat of steroids and human growth hormone being sold on the Internet. Mitchell details the issues surrounding traditional drug distribution through the Internet and extrapolates the same concepts with steroids. Mitchell identifies the means of distribution:

> The first internet distribution method differs only slightly from the traditional model for drug dealing, using the internet instead of gym locker rooms or street corners as a semi-anonymous marketplace for drug transactions. The second pattern is more elaborate, involving 'rejuvenation centers' that troll the internet for customers, corrupt physicians who write prescriptions for patients they have not seen, and compounding pharmacies that fill these dubious prescriptions and deliver performance enhancing substances to end users by mail. (p. 134)

The Internet sales of these substances often can distance a player from the source and make it more difficult to find substance abusers. This chapter also focuses on players who have been linked to Internet sales of steroids and human growth hormone. The format is similar to the one in Chapter XIII: Mitchell names a player and discusses the particular instances linking the player to Internet purchases of illegal substances. Many of the players listed in this section had already been exposed as steroid users by other outlets including the *New York Daily News, Sports*

Illustrated, San Francisco Chronicle, the *Albany Times,* and *ESPN* (pp. 243-257). Again, this is simply another way to give weight to Mitchell's claims.

Chapter X is titled "Review of the Major League Baseball Joint Drug Prevention and Treatment Program." Mitchell compares MLB's program with other major sports, discusses the nuances of the program, and also details how to evaluate the effectiveness of a particular program. Ultimately, Mitchell reviews the program fairly objectively in this chapter.

In the following chapter, Chapter XI, Mitchell identifies his recommendations. Mitchell calls for an all-out overhaul in Major League Baseball: he believes some of his recommendations should be implemented immediately and unilaterally by the Commissioner's Office and others would be subject to a collective bargaining agreement with the Players Association (p. 285). More than just finding issues, Mitchell also proposes recommendations for solutions. Mitchell calls for steroid prevention to be a higher priority for the league, a "greatly enhanced educational program that focuses on real-life stories as well as on all the risks involved in the use of performance enhancing drugs," and the continuation of a comprehensive approach to drug testing involving the league and the Players Association (p. 285).

Next, within the same chapter, Mitchell details five recommendations for investigation including establishing a department of investigation within the MLB, better communication between the Commissioner's Office and Law Enforcement Agencies, individual clubs investigating their own players more thoroughly, individual clubs creating their own internal policies about substance violations, and logging packages sent to players at MLB ball parks to ensure steroids are not being delivered inside ball parks. Mitchell also lists four additional enhancements he thinks that could be made including background investigations of prospective clubhouse personnel, random drug testing of clubhouse personnel, the implementation of a hot

line for reporting anonymous tips, and the top draft prospects having to be tested prior to the draft each year.

Mitchell then discusses changes that could be made to the educational program in MLB. Mitchell believes communicating the detriments of steroid use could significantly impact the future of the game. Mitchell believes in crafting the appropriate narrative around performance-enhancing drugs. Also, he wishes to explain the health risks as well as the non-health effects of buying performance-enhancing substances from Internet Pharmacies (pp. 299-301).

This chapter continues with his recommendations for further improvement of the Joint Drug Prevention and Treatment Program. Mitchell believes the program must be independent, transparent, year-round, and flexible enough to employ best practices as they develop. Additionally, the program must always have adequate funding and respect the legitimate rights of the players.

The final section of Chapter XI is entitled "We Need to Look to the Future." Mitchell notes that "more than half of the players mentioned in this report are no longer playing Major League Baseball or its affiliated minor leagues and thus are beyond the authorization of the Commissioner to impose discipline" (p. 308). Additionally, Mitchell suggests, "The Commissioner should give the players the chance to make a fresh start, except where the conduct is so serious that he must act to protect the integrity of the game" (p. 309). Even though Mitchell was the man in charge of the investigation, this shows that his primary goal was not to punish players, but rather to fix the game.

The final chapter of the book, Chapter XII, is the shortest chapter in the report. Mitchell simply highlights five points from the entire report.

1. The use of steroids in Major League Baseball was widespread.

2. The players who used steroids were “wrong.” The players who followed the laws and the rules were “faced with the painful choice of either being placed at a competitive disadvantage or becoming illegal users themselves. No one should have to make that choice.”
3. Although the players are responsible for their own actions, everyone involved in baseball over the past two decades including the Commissioners, club officials, the Players Association, and players should share to some extend in the responsibilities for the Steroid Era. This is based on the “collective failure to recognize the problem as it emerged and to deal with it early on” before it “became widespread.”
4. “Knowledge and understanding of the past are essential if the problem to be dealt with effectively for the future.”
5. Focus on the important and difficult task ahead: “Everyone involved in Major League Baseball should join in a well-planned, well-executed, and sustained effort to bring the era of steroids and human growth hormone to an end and to prevent its recurrence in some other form in the future.” (pp. 310-311)

“The Mitchell Report” is a document with a clear message: The report highlights the prevalence of performance-enhancing drugs in the game of baseball and offers potential solutions for how the game can endure. One thing that sets this report apart from others, including the documents found on the BALCO investigation, is that “The Mitchell Report” has a stake in baseball. Regardless of all of the setbacks from the findings, Mitchell’s final message is about moving on after all of his findings. More than just identifying a problem, Mitchell is trying to propose a solution.

The Reaction to "The Mitchell Report" and the Ongoing Skepticism in the Game

The Boston Red Sox won their second World Series in four years in their victory against the Colorado Rockies. The Red Sox had not won a championship since 1918, and then won two in a four-year span. On the other side, the Rockies made their first fall classic in their team's franchise history. The Winter Meetings had concluded on December 6th, and it seemed like the next big news for baseball would be the reporting of pitchers and catchers for spring training. Instead, the baseball community was in shock over the wake of "The Mitchell Report." Players who were not named in the report spoke about the report as "disappoint" and "a black eye on baseball" ("Mitchell Report Reaction," 2007). Selig stated that he would "act" ("Mitchell Report: Baseball," 2007) on the problems that Mitchell uncovered, but for most fans, that was not enough. It was as though it was all too little too late.

"The Mitchell Report" became a catalyst for finger pointing, revisionist history, and another scandal that the game of baseball had to endure. Immediately after the publication, the media became saturated with opinions of the report. While many talked about the health risks, the criminality of the acts, and the ethical components, it seemed that talks about the statistics were the most notable. Mitchell's report states: "Widespread use by players of such substances unfairly disadvantages the honest athletes who refuse to use them and raises questions about the validity of baseball records" (Mitchell, 2007, p. SR-8). The statistics themselves are a part of baseball history, and the fabric and narrative of the game is told through those statistics. Columnist, Tim Dahlberg, notes that some fans have actually become numb to steroid talk (2009). Although "The Mitchell Report" was the proof that people had needed, there were other isolated instances that seemed to pop-up before. Prior to the publication of "The Mitchell Report," there were other indicators of steroid use in baseball.

The whispers turned into suspicions, and the logical next step was for a full-fledged investigation. In some ways, the precursors to "The Mitchell Report" helped to assuage some of the shock in the matter. The number of people connected to steroids in the report was what stood out most, but many turned their heads to the ethical portion of steroid use, and skipped right to the sanctity of the statistics. One of the most immediate polls that circulated was whether or not players who are confirmed steroid-users should have an asterisk next to their names and next to their numbers (Ezra, 2008).

"The Mitchell Report" also acted as proof to otherwise strong suspicions. Because the report included individual testimonies and findings of chronic and ongoing use, Mitchell's findings were tangible evidence that incriminated many baseball players. Additionally, a United States Senator, not simply a member of the baseball community, conducted the report. This report was much larger than the game of baseball itself, and ultimately had effects on more than just baseball, but the American public as a whole.

One of the greatest problems of the Steroid Era is that people will never know the full story. Unlike our legal system that states a person is innocent until proven guilty, in the baseball world, if a player is a suspect, he is all but condemned to persecution. However, this is not without reason. There have been a number of famous cases that occurred after "The Mitchell Report" where players have denied steroid use and later been confirmed users.

Alex Rodriguez is considered as one of the most prolific players the game has ever seen. After the 2007 season, Rodriguez already had three MVP awards, became the youngest player to reach the illustrious 500 home run club with his home run on August 4, 2007, and accumulated

2,250 hits and was all but assured to reach 3,000 hits:[13] all signs were pointing toward Cooperstown. When "The Mitchell Report" was released, many held their breath to see if the game's golden boy, the only legitimate candidate to dethrone Bonds' tainted all-time homerun record, was listed. Although there were many reports that he used steroids, Rodriguez was not included in Mitchell's report. In fact, A-Rod even released a statement after the report with his own response: "These are guys that I play with. They're my teammates, friends, people that I respect, people that I play with every day. If anything comes of this, [I] would be extremely disappointed. I mean it would be a huge black eye on the game of baseball. A lot of fans, they just want to know a lot" ("Mitchell Report Reaction," 2007). His words seemed sincere, and, especially at the time, he was good for the game. The clean-cut Rodriguez seemed to be the hero to emerge clean from the black mark of steroids. In March of 2008, *The New York Times* and *CBS News* conducted a nation-wide poll, and found Alex Rodriguez to be the second most popular player in the game, behind teammate Derek Jeter (Schreiber & Thee, 2008). After reports surfaced in 2007 that Rodriguez was, in fact, a steroid user, his first instinct was to deny. He elected to clear his name by sitting down for an interview on *60 Minutes*. Rodriguez was asked point blank: "For the record, have you ever used steroids, human growth hormone, or any other performance-enhancing substance?" To which he replied, "No." He even went on to say that he never felt compelled to use steroids because he "never felt outmatched on a baseball field" and that he is trying to do the best he can with "the ability that God gave (him)" ("A-Rod: I've Never Used Steroids," 2007). At the time of the interview, A-Rod seemed to be everything that was right in baseball; but unfortunately for the game, it was not really the case. In February of 2009, Alex Rodriguez came clean about his steroid use (Hoch, 2009). He did not come to this

[13] Alex Rodriguez reached the 3,000 hit plateau on June 19, 2015 with a home run. Rodriguez is only the 29th player in Major League History to accumulate 3,000 hits in his career (*FanGraphs*).

revelation due to a guilty conscious, but rather because of a failed drug test.

Again, Rodriguez said the right things, sounded sincere, and attempted to move on. But little by little, more information emerged suggesting that his knowledge of what he took and the time frame in which he took it seemed to negate his confession. Even after trying to move on from his previous steroid-use and his lies to the public, Rodriguez still took performance-enhancing supplements again. Additionally, and most notably, he received baseball's longest performance-enhancing drug disciplinary action by being suspended for 162-games, the entire 2014 season (Sanchez, 2014).

Another case of a player claiming innocence and being found to be lying was Ryan Braun. Braun, the National League MVP winner in 2011, had tested positive for a performance-enhancing drug in December of 2011. He appealed his suspension and "won on a technicality" (Kepner, 2012). Outspoken about his "win," Braun stated the following: "We were able to get through this because I am innocent and the truth is on our side" (2012). Despite the lingering stigma on Braun, he was permitted to continue playing without penalty, until February of 2013 when he was once again linked to performance-enhancing drugs. However, this time he was found guilty and served a 65-game suspension. He served the allotted 50 game suspension and an additional 15 games were added due to his appeal in the 2011 case (Haudricourt, 2013).

Both Rodriguez and Braun knowingly took illegal substances, lied about it, attempted to cover it up, and both did so multiple times. Even after saying all of the right things, some players will continue to try to find an edge. Players like Rodriguez and Braun may be exceptions, yet they make others leery and skeptical of all players. Even if a player says he is not taking performance-enhancing supplements, the general public is often thinking that they have all heard that before. This is directly affecting suspected, but not proven, steroid users.

One of the major issues of this ongoing suspicion is linked to the Hall of Fame. A player becomes immortalized if he is inducted into the Hall of Fame. The "Baseball Hall of Fame may be the most prestigious of any Sports Hall of Fame… there is no doubt that Baseball's version of the Hall of Fame is by far the most relevant and the most difficult to get enshrined in" (Buchner and Johnson, 2015). And if a player deserves to be a part of the Hall of Fame but isn't included because of unproven speculations, there is a serious problem.

In recent years, there have been two players "whose Hall candidacies have been hurt because some voters have connected them with PED use despite a lack of definitive proof" (Stark, 2015). There first is Mike Piazza, catcher from 1992-2007 who predominantly played for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the New York Mets. David Lennon states: "There's no point arguing that Mike Piazza belongs in the Hall of Fame. It's not even a worthwhile debate. By any statistical measure, Piazza should be a lock for Cooperstown" (Lennon, 2015). With 427 career home runs, and 396 while actually catching, he has the most home runs of any catcher of all time, has the 4th most RBIs as a catcher, and has a career .308 batting average (*FanGraphs*). The numbers alone clearly suggest that Piazza should be in the Hall of Fame. "As unfair as it may be to link him to such a shadow campaign, we can't ignore those whispered allegations, either. Not when that suspicion -- absent of any concrete proof -- has to be the only reason Piazza isn't in the Hall of Fame" (Lennon, 2015). Lennon goes on to say that he doesn't know whether or not Piazza actually took steroids; in fact, he cannot know if anyone during that era did not. But the fact that players are being held out of Cooperstown, baseball's highest honor, because of suspected use goes on to show exactly how prevalent this problem continues to be. At least for Piazza, he was eventually was elected into the Hall of Fame in 2016 when he garnered 83% of the vote on his 4th year on the ballot (*Baseball-Reference*). Even though Piazza was elected in

2016, perhaps he was held back for three years to see if any new information emerged to link him to steroids.

The second case revolves around Jeff Bagwell. He has spent six years on the ballot, and he still has not been elected. To test if Bagwell is worthy of the Hall of Fame, one can take an analytical perspective by researching JAWS (Jaffe WAR Score system). JAWS is "a means to measure a player's Hall of Fame worthiness by comparing him to the players at his position who are already enshrined, using advanced metrics to account for the wide variations in offensive levels that have occurred throughout the game's history" (Jaffe, 2015). According to JAWS the average Hall of Fame first baseman has an unweighted JAWS of 53.8 and a weighted JAWS of 54.2 (2015). Jeff Bagwell's career JAWS is 63.9 (2015), putting him above Hall of Fame first basemen Frank Thomas who was elected as a first ballot Hall of Famer with a 59.5 JAWS (Jaffe, 2015). Although using this particular metric is questionable, it does prove a point that Bagwell is statistically worthy of being considered.

In the 2016 ballot, Bagwell received 71.6% of the vote. Jeff Bagwell will almost certainly get in to the Hall of Fame in upcoming years, but again, that still does not help him now. There have only been 10 Hall of Fame first basemen elected by the Baseball Writers' Association of America (BBWAA), and the statistics indicate that Bagwell should be number 11. To take away the single greatest baseball achievement for a suspected PED user is unfair to those who are wrongfully accused.

However, cases like Piazza and Bagwell will likely continue to emerge throughout the upcoming years. Many still hold scrutiny toward most who hit home runs during the Steroid Era. In February of 2015, Baseball commissioner Rob Manfred engaged in a Q&A with ESPN.com reporters. When he was asked about how writers should handle Hall of Fame ballots for PED

users or suspected users, he responded directly:

> The only piece of advice that I'm comfortable giving is that I think that everyone should keep in mind the difference between players who tested positive and were disciplined on the one hand, and players where somebody has surmised that they did something on the other. And I think, based on what you read in the media, sometimes those lines get blurred. And I think it gets really important to keep that distinction in mind.
>
> I think it's unfair…for people to surmise that Player A did X, Y or Z, absent a positive test, or proof that we produced in an investigation, or whatever. I just think it runs contrary to a very fundamental notion in our society, that you're innocent until somebody proves you're guilty. (Stark, "Commish: Don't surmise PED use," 2015)

Manfred's message is clear: a person is innocent until they are found guilty, not the other way around. Perhaps Manfred's message was properly understood because Mike Piazza was entered into the Hall of Fame on the next ballot after these comments.

As long as steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs are a part of the game, these conversations will not go away. As recently as April 2015, Jenrry Mejia was suspended for 80 games due to testing positive for performance-enhancing drugs (Rubin, 2015). The bulk of the users may have peaked in the 90s and the 00s, but that does not mean the game of baseball is devoid of illegal substances. Each time a new player is found to have failed a drug test he sets back the entire game. It recasts the shadow of doubt, making it impossible to move past the Steroid Era.

The Issues that Remain after "The Mitchell Report"

From a philosophical perspective, one of the recurring themes throughout the Steroid Era is trust: the trust lost in the league to govern its players; the trust lost between players and fans;

and the trust lost between the players who knowingly took performance-enhancing supplements to then compete against players who did not. These trust issues in the game of baseball can have ongoing consequences if they are not resolved. Arnett notes "Trust is put at risk when individuals are not convinced they can make a difference" (Arnett, 2003, p. 235). The notion of trust itself is put in to question when nothing is expected of an individual, a group, or the Other. With trust at risk, we may fall in to a hermeneutic of suspicion. "A hermeneutic of suspicion is the result of a generalized lack of trust in existence that encourages us to interpret daily communicative actions from a vantage point of mistrust and doubt" (p. 238). Instead of listening to a ball player plea for innocence, it is much more likely for a culture without trust to perpetually assume the worst. Just because Alex Rodriguez, Ryan Braun, and many more have lied to the public does not necessarily mean that everyone who is accused is automatically guilty.

Although "The Mitchell Report" produced findings that showed the widespread use of illegal substances in the game, the report did not totally crush the fan base. Attendance did drop from the game's all-time peak in 2007 (Lindholm, 2015); however baseball has remained successful since the Steroid Era. One of the reasons that attendance did not have a stark drop off may have been because fans were already assuming the worst. Although the steroid scandal did impact what the media covered and the general opinion of the sport, it did not significantly affect attendance. Despite some moderate shifts, the overall popularity of the sport has been steady since 1996.[14] The fact that the game's popularity has been able to bear bad times indicates that the league is sustainable; however, if one were to make a claim that the game has been able to maintain its popularity partly because the public did not expect have any moral expectations of the players, then that is far more concerning, especially in a time when players are taking illegal

[14] Major League Baseball saw a total of 73,760,020 over 2,417 dates, for an average of 30,517 per game. The average is the seventh-highest mark of all-time (Brown, 2015).

substances, cheating the game, and lying to the public. Even as the media sensationalized the findings of "The Mitchell Report" and many were shocked at the players who were listed in the report, the game still continued to prosper. Due to the decline in attendance after the strike, there is proof that the game is not untouchable. The 1993 season was the first season with over 70 million in attendance, and that was not reached again until 1998. Now, after "The Mitchell Report," each season has drawn at least 73 million fans (Lindholm, 2015). Perhaps people continued to attend games because baseball was no longer America's pastime, it was just a game filled with greedy players, owners, and workers. If this is even part of the reason that attendance has remained, this speaks to the larger issue of trust between the game and its fans.

Without concrete places of trust, "communication is significantly affected" (Arnett, 2003, p. 240). Additionally, when communication is affected, so too is the common center. "Left with no common center or moral story to offer a beginning for conversation, a person can lose a sense of direction" (p. 233). And it is my contention that is what is occurring in baseball since the strike. Perhaps the beginning of the mistrust began with the baseball strike, and the Steroid Era is merely an extenuation of that lack of trust. Regardless of when the common center was lost, the impact is still the same: the game no longer has a sense of its navigation and direction for a future due to its lack of a firm connection to our past. The lack of trust in the present also establishes mistrust toward the future (p. 235). If there is no trust between the players and their fans, there will be no ongoing tradition to uphold; there will be no real connection to that past.

For many, the most problematic aspect of the Steroid Era is its impact on the game's statistics. The fixation on the game's numbers is a definite connection to the past and the game's tradition; however, it is not the only connection to the past. Nostalgic fans think back to Hank Aaron's home run record, 755, and want to erase Bonds' 762 (or at the very least mark it was an

asterisk). But the fact that the narrative of the Steroid Era starts and ends with statistics simply misses the true nature of baseball and the impact of cheating in the game of baseball. If the game is played for another hundred, two hundred, or five hundred years, the chances are that many, if not all, of the all-time great records will be broken. Arnett talks about the era of the parenthesis as being a minor issue in the "long haul of history," (p. 243) and he is right. Steroid users have been demonized because they have stripped hard-working athletes of sacred records; but the steroid users also must be held for trial of their ethical behavior. There is no denying that statistics play a large role in the tradition of baseball, but the impact of steroids affected much more than the stat sheets.

Currently, we live in a time after the Steroid Era, even while performance-enhancing drugs are still a part of the game. Due to this confusing set of circumstances, it becomes necessary to start to think about our ground, to think about where we are now, and to think about where we want to be. We should be "looking for ways to nourish havens of trust in partnership…for anyone willing to roll up their sleeves and work on the problems of our era. Such trust is tied to the importance of the journey in our work and less to romantic images of the past" (p. 244). This is not to presuppose that the past is unnecessary or irrelevant, because the past allows us to have a starting point for our common centers, a place to move forward from; instead, this calls for an understanding and an appreciation of the past, but to also urge individuals to work and to propel us to keep moving forward. To answer the problems of our era, we must come together, without mistrust, and convene in havens of trust to establish our direction for our future with our feet planted on the ground.

One of Mitchell's major messages was focused on the future of baseball: "Knowledge and understanding of the past are essential if the problem to be dealt with effectively for the

future" (Mitchell, 2007, p. 302). Mitchell seems to have a grasp on looking forward to the future, but also understanding that baseball cannot just forget the Steroid Era because it happened. To deal with its effects, one must become informed and use the Steroid Era as a lesson.

Commissioner Selig also reaction to "The Mitchell Report" with a similar message: "The fact of the matter is that it happened. This document should act as a road map not only for us, but for the people that come after us. What we all need to do is move forward now" (Bloom, 2007). It is interesting to note that Selig talks about the road map, a similar navigation tool that Arnett calls for. Without a connection with the past and a navigational tool, we are lost. Additionally, I believe that Selig found the right words to follow "The Mitchell Report," but the action must be taken by all, not just the league itself. Perhaps the people were not willing to roll up their sleeves and do the work.

To convene in the havens of trust, action must be taken. For the game of baseball, the onus starts with the league. The league that once seemed to overlook the use of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs now has the most strict and thorough policy in all of professional sports (Nightengale, 2014). Now, the onus must begin with the players. With a proper drug policy in place, it should be understood that any foreign substance or supplement should be reviewed or checked with the league prior to its use; in a time of mistrust, few will believe a player who unknowingly took a banned substance. The trust has been broken between the players and their fans due to being deceived by Rodriguez, Braun, and others. To rebuild that trust, players must not give the fans a reason to doubt. Additionally, there should be a greater respect for the game from the players, and understand that their actions will undoubtedly shape the future of the game. If players "are not convinced they make a difference," (Arnett, 2003, p. 235) a moral code may not apply to their thinking process. This is why it is essential for players

to respect the game, realize their significance as part of the ongoing narrative, and to uphold the traditions of the past.

In addition to the changes in the people who play or prosper from the game of baseball, there should be some responsibility placed on the fans of the game. This is where the ethical component is truly unveiled. Baseball is about more than statistics, and the fans of the game must also hold baseball and its players to a higher standard. There are some ways to measure the caliber of person who plays baseball. Many studies point to statistics in terms of criminality, Major League Baseball has significantly less offenses than the National Football League or the National Basketball Association (Tracy, 2014). But the game of baseball is being held to an even higher level: one in which character of the players comes into question. More than arrests or prison sentences, players must be held accountable for transgressions against the game.

As stated earlier, Arnett, Fritz, and Bell content that communication ethics derive from what one protects and promotes (2009). As a fan base, if what we protect and promote are statistics and records, then the game is fundamentally flawed and limited. Instead, if there is an emphasis on sportsmanship, respect, and character, then the game has much firmer ground to establish its havens of trust.

The 1919 World Series was such a major concern that the commissioner sentenced a lifetime ban from baseball to eight men. One of the eight men, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, hit .375 with four extra base hits and six RBIs in an eight game series, and many debate whether or not he actually intentionally lost games (Pruitt, 2013). Instead of dealing with each person individually or even just sentencing the men to suspensions, the commissioner acted with a swift and stern punishment. Perhaps this was his attempt to hold baseball to a different standard.

Nearly a century later, it seems that the game is no longer holding itself to that different standard. For the game and its fans to simply accept steroid-users is to essentially accepting steroid use. There is a time for second chances, and there is a time for compassion, but it cannot be overlooked when players disrespect the game of baseball and cast a shadow over its storied legacy. More than the statistics, players should also be judged by their character, because after all it is people who play the game of baseball, and those players craft the narratives that become the game's history.

Commissioner Landis may have acted brashly with his decision for lifetime bans, and there are many who still believe "Shoeless Joe" should be reinstated into baseball; in fact, there was a motion for his reinstatement in 2015 in which new the MLB commissioner Rob Manfred denied (Grautski, 2015). Landis penalty may have been one of excess, but baseball's actions toward the Steroid Era were definitely in deficiency: deficient to identify the problem earlier; deficient to contain the problem as it became more widely known; and deficient in upholding the game to a different standard.

The late reaction on the part of the game runs parallel to Casey's first swing in his imaginary at bat: he reacted late and a fastball was put past him. As the pendulum of the game swings, neither baseball nor Casey can afford to act as deficient again. Casey will wait patiently for his next opportunity.

Chapter III: Advanced Metrics and Communication

Just as he was in the original poem, Casey found himself once again behind in the count after the outbreak of steroids. However, unlike the past, Casey did not watch the pitch go by. Although the league was initially deficient in its response to steroids in the game, the league eventually did act. The reaction on the part of the game to implement a strict drug policy could be seen as an attempt, a swing. Yet the league reacted late, just like Casey, who swung and missed a fastball in his imaginary at bat. The eventual action still had the same result, causing him being down 0-1 in the count as he waited for the next pitch to be flung his way.

61. .406. 511. 755. 2,632. To some, those are just numbers. To others, those are baseball history. Roger Maris broke Babe Ruth's home run record (60) in 1961 by hitting 61 home runs. Ted Williams is the only player after 1930 to have a season batting average over .400 with his .406 mark in 1941. Cy Young recorded 511 career wins, 94 more than any other player in Major League history. Hank Aaron hit 755 career home runs, destroying the big league record before him, held by Babe Ruth (714).[15] And Cal Ripken Jr. etched his name in the record books by playing in 2,632 consecutive games over the course of 16 seasons (*FanGraphs*).

These numbers, like many more, are inextricably tied to the game. This is part of the reason why the Steroid Era was so devastating to baseball: the artificially enhanced numbers destroyed sacred records and thus compromised beloved numbers. Although the statisics should not be the only thing people care about, as was stated in Chapter II, it is also unrealistic to think that statistics would not still hold an important role in the history of baseball. While traditionalists will fight over whether or not known or suspected steroid-users such as Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Alex Rodriguez, and others should have their statistics accompanied

[15] Barry Bonds later broke Aaron's record by hitting 762 home runs (*FanGraphs*), yet many still look to Aaron's record since Bonds has been linked to steroids.

with an asterisk, a new enemy emerges, a predator that attempts to disprove a century of baseball thought, alter its assessments, and claim the throne as king of baseball analysis: That enemy is qualitative research.

Sabermetrics is the study of in-game baseball analysis. The name is taken from SABR, *The Society for American Baseball Research*. Bill James, one of the greatest proponents of sabermetrics and guiding force behind the book *Moneyball,* defined sabermetrics as "the search for objective knowledge about baseball" (Grabiner, 1994). To better understand the game and to more objectively view players, new statistics have been introduced into baseball. But rather than supplement traditional statistics and metrics, many proponents of sabermetrics attempt to replace traditional statistics entirely.

To best understand this phenomenon, a proper investigation must take place. There are five sections to this chapter. First, I will have to identify specific cases in in which statistics are being devalued in baseball, and then I will explain the implications of devaluing these statistics. Next, I will take a step back and contextualize the argument between traditional statistics and sabermetrics, traditional thinking versus new age thinking. Then, this chapter will cover the influence of sabermetrics on the game of baseball. Finally, I will attempt to mediate the conversation between the two sides with the use of communication in hopes to find common ground in which traditional statistics can work in conjunction with qualitative research.

Devaluing Traditional Statistics

Turning over baseball cards as a kid, I realized what numbers mattered. For position players it was the Triple Crown - batting average, home runs, and RBIs (runs batted in). For pitchers it was wins, strikeouts, and ERA (earned run average) – the pitching Triple Crown. However, today some of the most basic baseball metrics are being questioned. There are many

sabermetricians who no longer wish to make these cornerstone statistics the preferred metrics anymore. Although many traditional statistics are being devalued, three of the core baseball statistics are under fire: batting average and RBIs for position players and the win/loss record for pitchers. All three of these statistics are regularly being questioned, and rarely are they given as much credit as they were in the 20th century.

In baseball, a batting average is simply the number of hits a player has divided by the number of at bats. Ted Williams, one of the game's greatest all-time hitters, is quoted saying: "Baseball is the only field of endeavor where a man can succeed three times out of ten and be considered a good performer" (Palmer, 2006, p. 5). And, in fact, Williams is still right. Over the last century, the benchmark for a good hitter has been to hit .300 for the season – and a great hitter may hit .300 for a career. Yet, there are many who no longer want to give as much credence to batting average.

CBS Baseball Writer Matt Snyder wrote an article in November of 2012 entitled "My plea to mainstream on-base percentage instead of batting average." On-base percentage is similar to batting average, but it also includes the number times a player walks and the number of times a player is hit by a pitch. Snyder's point is simply that batting average overlooks the players who are being pitched around and who are being walked. "There are four players with more than 2,000 career walks: Barry Bonds, Rickey Henderson, Base Ruth and Ted Williams… In its purest form, OBP is basically measuring the amount of times a hitter does not make an out" (Snyder, 2012). Snyder's point is well-taken. The four players he names are amongst the greatest the game has ever seen. Henderson, Ruth, and Williams are all in the Hall of Fame, and Bonds' numbers alone, without his link to steroids, would easily have made him a first ballot

Hall of Famer. And while Snyder's example helps to highlight his position, substituting one statistic for another has its consequences.

Another offensive statistic that is losing its importance is the RBI. RBI, or run batted in, is a statistic used in baseball to credit a batter when the outcome of a player's at bat results in a run being scored, except in certain situations such as when an error is made on the play or when the batter grounds into a double play. The RBI, one of the three Triple Crown statistics, has often been a link to power hitters who produce runs for their teams.

Writer for *The Hardball Times*, *Gammons Daily*, and a beat writer for the Detroit Tigers, Neil Weinberg is a baseball analyst with a sabermetrics background. As part of his "Education" to the readers of *FanGraphs*, a website often sited on *The MLB Network* and *Sports Center*, Weinberg wrote an article titled "Stats to Avoid: Runs Batted In (RBI)." Throughout the piece, Weinberg makes a number of claims using empirical research to suggest that "there is very little evidence that timely hitting or clutch hitting is a skill separate from regular hitting…(and) even if those are real skills, RBI is a very crude way to measure that skill and you should use something else" (Weinberg, 2014). Weinberg's analysis leaves little room for dialogue about varying perspectives of RBI.

Weinberg concludes by stating: "the more important reason why RBI isn't a good measure of offensive performance in any way is that it doesn't even capture the performance it means to. Batters do not have equal opportunities to collect RBI. In fact, in some cases the stars can align and hitters can rack up tons of RBI despite performing quite poorly, simply because they were given very favorable circumstances" (2014). Weinberg is clear, direct, and ruthless in his understanding of the RBI, essentially chastising anyone who continues to use the statistic.

Again, this is another instance in which an influential baseball writer undercuts the legitimacy of a statistic that has been a foundational to baseball metrics for over a century.

Similar to the argument to devalue batting average and RBIs, there is a movement in the sabermetrics community to "Kill the Win." For a piece of background information, a pitcher is awarded a win when he was pitching while his team took the lead and his team went on to win the game (for a starter to record a win, he must throw a minimum of five innings of work).

The leader of the charge to "Kill the Win" is Brian Kenny, Sports Columnist, Studio Host at *MLB Network*, and one of the loudest voices amongst sabermetricians. In his television program beginning in 2013, *MLB Now*, Kenny and Harold Reynolds, ex-MLB player and three-time Gold Glove winner, debate a sabermetrics-orientation versus a more traditional approach. Specifically, they debate the value of active players, compare players with past Major Leaguers, and discuss their own evaluations for awards such as Most Valuable Player, Cy Young Award, and Rookie of the Year.

In many of Kenny's debates, he points to the win/loss record as being a dated statistic. Many sabermetric proponents have also taken issue with win/loss records for pitchers, but it was Brain Kenny's claims that have stirred debate within the entire baseball community. In a 2013 article, the writer Mike Cardillo interviewed Brian Kenny about his feelings on the Win statistic in baseball. "In short — and few would argue — the win/loss stats do little to indicate how well a starting pitcher actually pitched. It's the one commonly used individual stat that's directly tied to team performance" (2013). An example would be that a good pitcher on a bad team who is provided with little run support may not win as many games as an average pitcher on an excellent team who provides him with above average run support.

Snyder, Weinberg, and Kenny make strong claims, and their insight as baseball analysts should be taken seriously. However, it should be understood that there will be a ripple effect in baseball if people were to turn away from traditional statistics like batting average, RBIs, and the win/loss record for pitchers.

Consequences of Devaluing Traditional Statistics

In the movie *Moneyball*, based on the book with the same title, on-base percentage is an important statistic behind "new age thinking." In the movie, Brad Pitt plays Billy Beane, the Oakland Athletics' General Manager. When talking about Scott Hatteberg, a player the Oakland scouts dismiss because of his low batting average, Pitt's character retorts saying, "He gets on base a lot. Do I care if it's a walk or a hit?" Some may not care, and agree with sabermetricians, but one must remember the ramifications on such a shift.

Tony Gwynn has been regarded as one of the greatest hitters in the game's history. He was one of 100 players inducted to the All-Century team in 1999. He is tied for 2nd on the all-time list with the eight career batting titles, and his eight titles are the most batting titles since 1920.[16] Looking back at his impressive career, he would have been assessed differently if on-base percentage were the preferred metric instead of batting average just like Snyder urges. Gwynn would have retired with just one on-base percentage title instead of his eight batting titles. He would drop from 15th all-time in batting average to 50th all-time in on-base percentage amongst all Hall of Famers (*FanGraphs*).

In addition to Snyder's claim about batting average, Weinberg attempts to dismiss RBIs. However, just like the ripple effect in on-base percentage being preferred over batting average, Weinberg's stance would have casualties as well. Having substantial RBI contributions, few

[16] Ty Cobb has 12 career batting titles, and Honus Wagner is tied with Gwynn with eight batting titles (*Baseball-Reference*). Neither Cobb nor Wagner won a batting title after 1919.

would argue that Cap Anson (2,075), Ty Cobb (1,933), and Honus Wagner (1,732) were great run producers. All three of these Hall of Famers have outstanding RBI totals, yet their home run totals are less than elite: Anson (97), Cobb (117), and Wagner (101). These three players are the only players in Major League history with over 1,600 RBIs and fewer than 240 home runs, double the number of home runs as Anson, Cobb, or Wagner. Due to their modest career number of home runs, many may deem these three great hitters, but perhaps not true power hitters. Yet, with the weight and the importance of the RBI, the baseball community knows their ability to drive in runs. A preferred metric to isolate a player's power is OPS (on-base plus slugging). OPS is a statistic that combines a person's on-base percentage with his slugging percentage. Even when preferring one statistic over another, like OPS instead of RBIs, there would be additional complications. Anson would move from 3rd most RBIs to the 203rd ranked player in OPS; Cobb would move from 8th on the all-time list on RBIs to 25th in OPS; and finally, Wagner would move from 21st to 141st. Even using a more complex sabermetric statistic like wRC+ (weighted runs created plus) which attempts to quantify a player's total offensive value while also accounting for park effects and the current run environment (*FanGraphs*), there are still discrepancies. Weinberg calls wRC+ one of "the best statistics," yet Anson would still move from 3rd in RBIs to 121nd in wRC+ with a career average of 134 weighted runs created plus, putting the Hall of Famer in the "Above Average" category based on *FanGraphs* context chart. Such drastic changes in all-time rankings would completely change the way in which these players are viewed.

As for Kenny's argument against the win statistic for pitchers, one can look to 2005's American League Cy Young Award. In 2005, Johan Santana, then with the Minnesota Twins, posted a better ERA, threw more innings, tallied more strikeouts, and gave up fewer walks and

hits per inning pitched than Bartolo Colon. But despite having objectively better numbers in all other major categories other than W/L record, Colon won the Cy Young Award. Colon's 21-8 record over Santa's 16-7 seemed to be the single metric that won Colon the award.

#	Name	Team	W	L	G	GS	CG	IP	ERA	SO	BB	WHIP	WAR
1	Johan Santana	Twins	16	7	33	33	3	231.2	2.87	238	45	0.97	7.1
2	Bartolo Colon	Angels	21	8	33	33	2	222.2	3.48	157	43	1.16	4.1

(Fangraphs, 2015)

Despite the empirical evidence suggesting that Santana was significantly better, considering his wins above replacement accounted for 3 wins more than Colon, Colon won the award.

Gwynn, Anson, Cobb, Wagner, and Santana are merely a few small examples of the implications of reevaluating baseball metrics. One cannot simply make a change without there being implications as to how specific players will be evaluated. However, questions emerge from this type of thinking: "Who cares?" some may say. "If sabermetricians are using better statistics to evaluate in-game analysis allowing people to better understand the game, wouldn't the more deserving players be the ones getting the accolades?" And the response to those questions are simply more questions. Who is to say that sabermetricians are using "better statistics"? And how does one know that those statistics are allowing us to "better understand the game"? And do the most deserving players actually receiving accolades?

The debate between the traditionalists and sabermetricians does not have a correct answer, regardless of what either side may say. Instead, this is contention between two narratives, two perspectives that value different things. Regardless of a person's view on the subject, the statistics clearly show that players could potentially be valued in much different ways if certain metrics were preferred over others.

Traditional Thinking versus New Age Thinking

In many ways, this is an axiology argument: a study of value. But when the two sides have a different understanding of value, what can be done? We live in a time of postmodernity, an era that "finds definition in difference and incommensurability of views of the good" (Arnett, Fritz & Bell, 2009, p. 211). "The good," as Arnett, Fritz, and Bell state, is found in which one "protects and promotes" (p. 4). Thus, we find the contention between traditional thinking and new age thinking insofar that each side is aligning with a different narrative; each side is protecting and promoting different ideals.

A single statistic cannot tell a story, or at the very least not a full story. It is the narratives we fashion around groupings of statistics that give them weight. In a time of difference, learning becomes the pragmatic good. New statistics will likely allow viewers, analysts, and scouts to have more information that will then influence various perspectives when assessing the value of a player in a game, a season, or a career. And that is a good thing. Using new statistics in conjunction with traditional statistics can likely give people more areas to investigate and ultimately learn more about the game and its players. The problem lies in the fact that many sabermetricians scoff at tradition, and believe that moving forward is the only logical option.

Tying this back to baseball, Matt Snyder's article opens up a conversation about on-base percentage being valued higher than batting average. He is not dismissing batting average. In fact, he says: "let me make one thing clear: Batting average is, and always will be, important. I'm not saying it's not important and, in fact, I hate it when some sabermetricians act like stats that they don't like aren't even remotely useful. I'm simply saying on-base percentage is *more* important than average" (2012). The way this is posed is from perspective that values the differences of opinions; he is recognizing the use of batting average, understanding its place in

the game, and simply pushing forward a different metric in which he finds to be better suited for assessing batting. Snyder's position is simply to give credence to on-base percentage, but still understanding that both batting average and on-base percentage will be a part of the larger picture. Yet, some wish to close off conversation.

When Snyder says "some sabermetricians," he is talking about people like Brian Kenny. Kenny's hyperbolic slogan, "Kill the Win," is not allowing for discourse to take place. Instead, he declares truth for others to learn. This isn't a debate of conflicting narratives because those engrossed by new age thinking do not wish to rehash the past. To them, what is new is better, and no conversation needs to be made. What is most troubling about some sabermetricians is that there is a subtle notion that the evidence they find is correct, while the findings of previous generations are foolish. The presupposition that things get better as they move forward is frightening. Those dedicated to a life where new is always better rarely look to the past to find ground to start from.

In the widely referenced piece, "The Sabermetric Manifesto," David Grabiner concludes by stating the following:

> Baseball statistics are useful only if they enhance your understanding of the game. Therefore, they should be judged by how well they measure what actually happens in the game. Meaningless statistics should be ignored or replaced; deficient statistics should be improved. And well-designed statistics should be used as an important part of discussion about the game and its players. (1994)

Grabiner's text on sabermetrics is often referenced in the sabermetric community and is seen by many as an important work for the field of baseball study. It is alarming that Grabiner states that "meaningless statistics should be ignored or replaced." By saying this, it is clear that the mode of

thinking is to expel statistics that are not relevant for sabermetricians. However, it is illogical to promote whatever is new and dissociate from a time and culture no longer pertinent to the present. Also, by "ignoring" statistics, one can no longer learn from them. If one were to simply value another statistic, like Snyder does with OBP over batting average, that person is not dismissing it completely. To ignore or dismiss a statistic is to presume it has no value.

Some of the disconcerting aspects of sabermetrics are sentiments from people like Grabiner. While traditionalists may have room for sabermetrics, it does not seem like many sabermetricians have room for traditional statistics. Rather than add to the number of statistics reviewed, many sabermetricians only want their own metrics to be recognized.

I do not mean to disregard sabermetrics as a whole; to the contrary, I believe there are many cases that the newly developed statistics become extremely helpful in evaluating talent in the game of baseball. Additionally, technology has given the ability to track and record things that were never able to before like UZR, a defensive metric that rates well an outfielder covers his position. UZR, like many other defensive metrics, are helping to shape the game's statistics. For over a century, the only defensive metric students of the game would regularly look at would be errors, but the number of errors a player has does not always correlate with how well or how poorly that person played. So, as the number of defensive metrics continues to grow, there become more areas in which players can be assessed.

Ultimately, using our reason and our intellect to better understand the game has been at the core of statistics since their inception. And that is precisely why it is foolish to disregard old statistics because new ones exist. A more thoughtful process must occur before substituting a particular metric. Replacing the old with the new without reflection is a concept that is dated and shortsighted. Regardless of how one evaluates talent in baseball, be it by using the eye test or the

numbers on a spreadsheet, one should never forget to learn from our past, to learn from our traditions, and to understand the repercussions of disregarding over a century's worth of thought. This becomes paramount at a time when sabermetrics are actually being implemented into the game.

The Influence of Sabermetrics

In the ongoing pursuit of objective evaluation, advanced metrics are actually making their way into the game. For years, analysts compiled data but rarely did those reports ever impact the game on the field. Many mangers made decisions based on instincts rather than probabilities; and even when decisions were made based on probabilities, like lefty/righty match-ups (where history has shown pitchers are often more effective when facing a batter of the same orientation), they were only done so after the basic numbers were so overwhelming favoring a position. Although complex findings were not a part a major part of the last century, there have been a number of waves of data-based information making their way to the diamond in the 21st century.

Pittsburgh-area writer, Travis Sawchik, published a seminal book in 2015, *Big Data Baseball: Math, Miracles, and the End of a 20-Year Losing Streak*, detailing the Pittsburgh Pirates improbable assent to the top of the standings by using probability. The book focuses specifically on the Pittsburgh Pirates, but the book's themes and applications are actually a microcosm for advanced metrics influence on the game of baseball.

Coming in to the 2013 season, the Pittsburgh Pirates held an albatross of 20 consecutive losing seasons, the longest such streak in professional sports in America of all-time (Sawchik, p. 1, 2015). Although the team had played well in 2012, finishing with a 79-83 record, the limited budget of the organization and the team's lack of any legitimate major league catching option seemed to indicate that the Pirates would regress in 2013. Instead, the Pirates posted their first

winning season in two decades in 2013, and Sawchik believes a large part of that turnaround was due to the implementation of advanced metrics. Sawchik identifies three distinct phases of the plan that led to the winning season: the ability to appropriately evaluate free agents through metrics other organizations did not yet value; the on-field change of adopting aggressive shifting; and the communication portion in which would require players to believe in the metrics, the team of statisticians to react to player suggestions and adapt to new data, and the management to govern the process.

The first phase required the Pirates to acquire a formidable catcher, and they found that is Russell Martin. Martin was a three-time All Star at the time with his best statistical year occurring in 2007.[17] With a lackluster 2012 season for the New York Yankees, Martin had a batting average of a pedestrian .211 and his free agent value was not very high. Many teams deemed him to be a catcher whose best years were behind him, and his recent statistics would not warrant giving him the multi-year deal he coveted. But rather than looking at his batting average or any other offensive statistic for that matter, the Pirates organization found a newly developed defensive metric that calculated the number of times a pitcher had a strike called on a ball that was outside of the strike zone. PITCHf/x, a system that "track(s) how accurately major league umpires called balls and strikes," (p. 62) drove the data that found Martin to be an undervalued catcher. Due to the subjectivity of the strike zone, more strike calls in favor of a team's pitcher will greatly enhance the pitcher's statistics and overall run prevention, or runs saved. So, if a catcher can make what should be a ball look like a strike to an umpire, it will then help the team. This catching ability is called pitch framing. Pittsburgh Pirates statisticians learned that Russell

[17] Prior to the 2013 season, Martin posted the majority of his best numbers in 2007 when he posted career bests in runs scored (87), hits (158), doubles (32), RBIs (87), stolen bases (21), batting average (.293), OPS (.843), and won his only Gold Glove (*Baseball-Reference*).

Martin framed more pitches than anyone else in baseball in 2012, and was thus being undervalued by other teams (p. 64). Using statistical information to evaluate and then pay players seems like a risk, especially when a team is valuing statistics that other teams do not.

In addition to Russell Martin, the Pittsburgh Pirates also needed to bolster their pitching rotation. To do so, the club took an interest in a very radical idea from a baseball hobbyist and blogger Voros McCracken. In an article published by *Baseball Prospectus*, McCracken noted that "hits allowed are not particularly meaningful statistic in the evaluation of pitchers" (2001). Sawchik notes, "this method of thinking meant that earned run average, ERA, the gold standard to judge pitcher performance, was faulty" (2015, p. 73). From the outside, it seemed that the Pirates were then not as interested in ERA, and instead became more interested in a statistic inspired by blogger McCracken and created by baseball analyst Tom Tango: that statistic was FIP, fielding independent pitching (p. 75). Essentially, FIP is a "statistic that estimates a pitcher's run prevention independent of the performance of their defense" (*FanGraphs*). This statistic would greatly favor pitchers who did not walk or hit many batters and also those who struck out a high percentage of batters. The theory is that one person may hit a scorching line drive in the gap that is run down and caught by an elite fielder, while another player hits a soft dribbler in between fielders. The first player has made an out, and that is good for a pitcher; and the second person got a hit, and that is bad for a pitcher. However, neither indicates how well a pitcher actually pitched to those batters.

Other teams in the league were still focusing on traditional statistics like ERA, and the Pirates ended up trading for AJ Burnett, who had an abysmal 5.12 ERA with the Yankees the previous year, and signing Francisco Liriano as a free agent, who, after being a CY Young

candidate in 2009,[18] had four consecutive years with an ERA above 5.00, making him an unattractive candidate. Yet both men posted better FIP stats than they did ERAs, and both were also still viewed as strikeout pitchers. With the promise that FIP was an indicating statistic proving that these two pitchers were more unlucky than bad, the Pirates ended up acquiring both men.

All three major acquisitions prior to the 2013 season were seen as high-risk candidates: all three men had shown promise at points in their careers, but all three lacked recent success. At the time, the public did not understand the Pirates moves. Even then-*Pittsburgh Tribute-Review* columnist Dejan Kovacevic claimed that the Martin move was a "desperation" attempt by the Pirates that would hurt them in the long run (p. 72). Others believed that the Pirates were trying to find once-stars for a bargain, making them a cheap organization. However, instead of attempting to build a roster solely on a budget, the Pirates were also doing so with statistical knowledge that their organization believed in, and other organizations did not yet.

After acquiring the talent they needed, the Pirates then wanted to change the actual on-field play. This change shifted where the players were literally positioned on the field. "Infielders and outfielders position themselves not based upon where balls are most often hit but, rather, equidistant from other fielders… This traditional defensive position has for more than a hundred years been based on anecdotal evidence" (p. 31). In fact, outside of a few specific left-handed hitters, like Ted Williams in the 1940s, there were not many documented shifts throughout the history of baseball (p. 32). The Pirates were not going to shift versus a few select players, but a large number of players who batted against them would encounter some type of shift.

[18] Liriano garnered only 1 vote for the Cy Young Award in 2009, and was tied for 11th place in the voting. Still, to that point, it was the most consistent season in his career with 31 starts, 191.2 innings pitched, 201 strikeouts, 14 wins, and a 3.62 ERA (*Baseball-Reference*).

From the onset, players seemed reluctant to such a significant change (pp. 85-90). Some wondered how left-handed batters wouldn't get hits regularly if the majority of the left side of the infield were left open. But the coaches and analysts "explained outside pitches hit into play to the opposite field were more likely to be lifted into the air due (to) the angle of the swing. Hundreds of thousands of balls in play showed little evidence of hitters' changing their battle-ball profiles" (p. 90). It is almost always difficult to overhaul a traditional practice, but it becomes nearly impossible if there are not concrete reasons to do so. Even though many questioned the legitimacy of shifting, the statistics continued to prove that the probabilities would hold true over time, and that shifting would result in fewer runs allowed.

The shifts were largely a product of "big data" as Sawchik calls it. Years upon years of seasons, games, and pitches all broken down into stat sheets attempting to quantify as much as technologically-driven data possible. PITCHf/x was installed in every Major League stadium in 2006, and since then, every team has had access to vast amounts of data that breaks down every single pitch in every single big league game. But while the statistics pointed toward shifting, the Pirates front office knew that numbers would not be enough. Such a drastic change would also require a shift in thinking, which also was a challenge.

The third and final stage of the Pirates revitalization came with communication. The two leading men in the Pirates data analytics were Dan Fox and Mike Fitzgerald. Part of the implementation process was an organic relationship between the staff and the players to best understand this drastic change in positioning. Neither Fox nor Fitzgerald played Major League Baseball, yet they were both knowledgeable on defensive shifts (p. 85). This is noteworthy because throughout baseball history, former players become managers, coaches, hitting instructors, and serve other roles in the game. Taking advice from former players is something

Major Leaguers are used to; however, taking advice from people who never played an inning of Major or Minor League Baseball makes the relationship much different. To help smooth this transition, Manager Clint Hurdle urged for a symbiotic relationship between the statisticians and the players, and he facilitated communication at every turn.

Fox and Fitzgerald worked to make their data more accessible for athletes, understanding that "baseball players would logically have higher visual IQs since they are adept at tracking pitches thrown at 95 mph and at plotting courses in milliseconds to intercept fly balls and line drives" (p. 89). But more than just giving a rationale to players for positioning them in unfamiliar places, the relationship actually grew to becoming much more, where the players actually influenced the statistics and data being tracked by Fox and Fitzgerald.

The nexus of the Pittsburgh Pirates approach, the acquisition of undervalued talent, the implementation of data-driven findings, and the communication between the statisticians and the players, helped to produce the Pirates first winning season in 20 years, which also happened to get them to the playoffs for the first time since 1992. Each of their three offseason acquisitions performed even better than expected with Martin receiving MVP votes,[19] Liriano receiving CY Young votes,[20] and Burnett posting the 8th best FIP in the league[21] (*FanGraphs*). Additionally, the shifting also helped: some players like Andrew McCutchen and Neil Walker saw individual results, and the team went from being in the bottom third for shifts all the way up to number 6th in the league (Sawchik, 2015, pp. 107-108). Finally, the communication component facilitated much of the success. With an overarching strategic plan, the organization knew the role of Martin and pitch framing, they knew the assets of Liriano and Burnett as power arms capable of

[19] Martin received 1 vote, and was 24th in the MVP vote.
[20] Liriano received 3 votes, and was tied for 9th in the Cy Young voting.
[21] Burnett also did his job by striking out 209 men, and posted a 9.8 strike/9, the best mark in the league (*Baseball-Reference*).

strikeouts, and they knew the potential run prevention of radical shifts. Clearly communicating the plan throughout the organization impacted the team as a whole. It is through this type of communication that one can see the true direction of advanced metrics in baseball's future.

Is There a Middle Ground?

Sawchik's book is a study on a particular team in a given year in which advanced metrics helped a franchise produce a winning season. Although the book is based on a single instance, its lessons can be shared on a much grander scale. Additionally, the advanced metrics were the foundation of the turnaround, yet without proper communication, this transition could never have occurred.

Sawchik notes that the number of defensive shifts greatly rose from 2013 to 2014 (pp. 107-108), and perhaps the Pirates had something to do with that change. The focus on shifting is just the beginning. In the mid-2000s, it was the "Moneyball-Era," and teams focused on on-base percentage. Now, years later, it seems like shifts and catcher framing were two areas that had long been undervalued and are now being appreciated. As new statistics emerge and new information is found, other metrics will be preferred. "Said Baseball Info Solutions' John Dewan, 'In baseball when one team does something and they are successful, other teams try it out…Shifting was way up last year (in 2013). Our analytics are showing it has value'" (Sawchik, 2015, p. 108). Big data has already begun to play a role in on-field play, and if the past 15 years are any indication, the numbers will continue to aid in decision making.

From a practical perspective, this idea makes sense. Any way to get ahead of competition creates an advantage; if a team has information that others do not or perhaps a team has information that other teams do not value as highly, acting upon those findings could create a benefit for the teams that use the information. But what does this mean for baseball tradition?

Will undervalued areas continue to pop up for teams to take advantage of? Philosophically, what does it mean for a game that continues to seek out new statistics in an attempt to find something better than what we already know?

I believe the answer lies in communication ethics. From a communication ethics standpoint, Arnett notes that we live in a time of difference, of incommensurable goods, and when one is to think about the future of communication ethics, it seems that "all the terms point to learning as an encounter with difference" (Arneson, p. 66, 2007). There may be varying perspectives, but ultimately we can learn from these various views. "In a postmodern age of narrative and virtue contention, communication ethics is…first and foremost an act of learning about the ground, narrative, and standpoint that guides oneself, the Other, and the historical moment" (p. 66). This is to say that one can learn from the advanced metrics in baseball without destroying the ground of those who built the foundation of baseball statistics. Additionally, this does not point to a science in which ever plans to find ultimate statistical truth in baseball. Instead, there will always be varying perspectives, differences of opinions on which metrics will be and should be preferred, and a respect of others' ground. Just as much as new age statisticians should respect the ground of its predecessors, so should those who prefer more traditional statistics: both sides, and all other sides, in the conversation must learn from difference to promote a better future for baseball.

Clint Hurdle is quoted as saying "Tradition is a wonderful thing. There are reasons for honoring tradition and staying with tradition. But tradition can also be a vision killer" (Sawchik, 2015, p. 122). This quote by the manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates is actually quite profound. There are many reasons to continue a tradition; however tradition cannot cloud a person's

judgment of looking forward to the future. If tradition were the only narrative to follow, then the game of baseball could not continue to grow as it moves into the future.

Our current time is the gap between the past and the future. Arnett dissects the work of Hannah Arendt in his book *Communication Ethics in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt's Rhetoric of Warning and Hope*. Arendt notes: "Without tradition as the connecting link between past and future, the existential world calls for renewed clarity of thinking and dedication in our thinking" (2013, p. 49). Tradition, then, is a necessary ingredient to understanding the present as well as the future. Tradition helps to guide us through terms such as responsibility and virtue. Without tradition we would be required to have "an attentive responsiveness to the historical situation to understand…meaning" (p. 49). Tradition helps us to wade through the difficult issues of our age, including the complexities of a sport like baseball. The preservation of tradition occurs through communication.

One of the most profound aspects of Sawchik's book is his emphasis on human communication. The data was what led to the changes, but it was the people who mined the data working with the front office and implemented an entirely new process who helped to engage players on the field. Additionally, the new data did not erase old school thinking either. Even with such a significant increase in shifts, it should be noted that the Pirates (or any other team for that matter) did not use a shift against the majority of batters they faced. This means that the traditional positioning of players in the field is used in well over 50% of plays throughout all of baseball. There is great potential in new metrics, but there is also good reason to believe that things players have done for a century can work, too.

One of the greatest weaknesses in advanced metrics is that the new metric of choice is often used as a marketing tool to sensationalize the game. How the metric is delivered, promoted,

and advertised, shows its use. Over the past few years, there have been new statistics that have dominated baseball media. Batting average was substituted with on-base percentage; ERA was substituted with FIP, and then FIP was substituted with xFIP, supposedly a more accurate version of the statistic; and SLG is substituted with wRC+. The ultimate statistic, WAR (Wins Above Replacement), is so heavily debated that there are three different versions of the calculation: one by *Baseball Prospectus*, one by *Baseball-Reference*, and one by *FanGraphs*. The concern with all of these statistics is not that they are not helpful in identifying new perspectives of the game, but instead that they are so easily dismissible. For example, there is yet another new statistic to refine ERA: "*Skill-Interactive ERA (SIERA)* is the newest in a long line of ERA estimators. Like it's predecessors FIP and xFIP, SIERA attempts to answer the question: what is the underlying skill level of this pitcher? How well did they *actually* pitch over the past year? Should their ERA have been higher, lower, or was it about right?" (*FanGraphs* Library). It seems that one statistic replaces another, and the new statistic is later replaced by a newer statistic. This can have a devastating impact on the tradition of the game as well as the fundamental ground in which the present game can be played from. A fear is that some aspects of sabermetrics are faddish also is put into question. Baumer and Zimbalist wrote a book entitled *The Sabermetric Revolution: Assessing the Growth of Analytics in Baseball***.** Understanding that there is concern that the sabermetric revolution is surrounded by a cloud of suspicion of its authenticity, one of the book's major tasks is to "decipher what parts of baseball analytics are faddish and what parts are meritorious" (2014, p. x). Also, if a statistic can be refined and replaced in a few years, shouldn't that be another reason why some are justified in clinging to statistics that have been around since the late 1800s?

There must be a more thoughtful approach to accepting new data into the game or on the back of a baseball card. There must be a thoughtful manner in which one evaluates new statistics and weighs what it will gain with its knowledge and also what it was lose by devaluing another statistic. Additionally, while the sabermatricians can continue to come up with new metrics regularly, the game cannot adapt that fast. An example would be that an organization might sign a free agent in part due to a particular metric that may be replaced before the contract expires. There must be some form of a constant, some ground, some agreed upon starting place.

Sawchik is clearly in favor of big data being implemented into the game; but I also think he realizes that there are other components that are necessary. He makes note that at the beginning of the 2013 season, "Creating a culture of respect and communication was still a formidable barrier" (2015, p. 140). Understanding the communicative aspect between groups with different backgrounds and different perspectives of the game is one of the most insightful aspects of Sawchik's book. The Pirates turnaround was more than just about seeing numbers and implementing them into the game without thought; instead, it came with great deliberation, heavy scrutiny, and a slow process. Sawchik states that baseball is "a conservative game with a culture that is often slow to accept change" (p. 105). For such an extreme shift, these changes could not be made by sabermatricians who would talked down to players and coaches who did not understand the equations or the value of the new metrics. Instead, the change had to come from a team of people dedicated to communication ethics.

The people behind the scenes like Fox and Fitzgerald drove the change, but the ball players on the field also enacted it. "It wasn't just analysts thinking up areas to study and delivering the results. The players could ask a question that led to changes or interesting data findings. These interactions proved that the old school and the new school could not only coexist

but could enhance each other" (p. 97). This interaction can be seen as the exemplar. Although many players, specifically pitcher A.J. Burnett (p. 95), took issue with such drastic shifts, eventually all of the players, coaches, statisticians, and executives bought in to the system.

Preferred metrics are changing faster than ever and new data continues to be dumped onto the game. However, just because information is available does not necessarily mean that the information must be used. It is my contention that a deliberate process must be in place before adopting a new mode of thinking. The connection in Arendt's "gap" is where we must find meaning. "The trouble, however, is that we seem to be neither equipped nor prepared for this activity of thinking, of settling down in the gap between past and future" (Arendt, 2006, p. 13). Despite having been originally published in America in 1961, Arendt's words ring true today. Rather than thinking about the complexities of settling in the gap, many would prefer to shut off the past and head toward the future while others wish to remain caught in the past and disregard the future. Neither option is focused on thoughtful reaction, or the present historical moment.

To engage in dialogue with multiple perspectives (including tradition) is to allow for the possibility of making good choices in the present, the gap. The way in which this can be put into action in baseball would be in the decision-making of the way the game is played as well as the way the game is analyzed. Sabermatricians can become enamored with the numbers and lose themselves in the technologically advanced programs that churn out new metrics regularly. Additionally, traditionalists may let tradition become a "vision killer," as Hurdle said, and not allow them to develop and grow with the game.

Advanced metrics are here to stay, and teams who fully reject the teachings will be left behind. However, teams, players, and analysts should be mindful before buying in to new waves of thinking. To use a baseball metaphor, it has widely been accepted that if there is a close play

at first place, a tie goes to the runner. In similar fashion, I believe a tie should go to tradition. Before subscribing to a new mode of thinking, one should consider what could be lost and what could be gained by making the shift. To be patient and reserved, to listen to all information that presents itself, and to always protect and promote the sanctity of the game: these are the guidelines to follow to making meaning of "the gap."

Baseball's overzealous implementation of sabermetrics, the readiness to dismiss traditional statistics, and a constant focus on what is new are all reasons why the game has acted in excess, at least to this point. To reiterate, this is not to denounce those who use or employ sabermetrics. Instead this is a reminder to be mindful and cautious to those about its implementations. Especially in today's game, organizations that do not act according to advanced metrics are seen as relics. The pendulum has now swung the other way: instead of acting in deficiency, baseball is now acting in excess.

As for Casey and his imaginary at bat, he, too, was impetuous and swung early. Once again, he missed the ball. Finding himself down 0-2 in the count, he must find his way to come through for his team. Finding the middle ground, the place between deficiency and excess, will be the key to Casey's success, as well as the game of baseball.

Chapter IV: Technology in Baseball

In Chapter II, there was a review of steroids and other PEDs in the game of baseball and Major League Baseball's deficiency to act before the problem escalated into an epidemic. The game's deficiency can been understood in its inability to act, which caused a crisis within the game of baseball. Much like the delayed reaction or deficiency of the league, Casey too reacted late to his first pitch causing him to be behind in the count 0-1. Then, in Chapter III, there was a review of advanced metrics being implemented in Major League Baseball. Although advanced metrics have been studied for years, the sudden acceptance of the emerging statistics shows an impetuous reaction, one of excess. The way in which advanced metrics are currently being utilized in baseball are as follows: a new metric is developed and then preferred over an old metric or group of metrics; then, the newly preferred metric is replaced by something newer and "more accurate." This mode of thinking can be dangerous because there is no ground. Change is inevitable, but perpetually chasing what is new will not help to keep the spirit of baseball in mind. And just like the sabermatrician who is chasing the elusive statistic that will help solve the game of baseball, Casey chased a pitch that was not in the strike zone. Instead of being patient and reflecting, Casey swung at the second pitch and now is down 0-2 in the count. The first strike was due to deficiency, the second excess; Casey must find the mean, the sweet spot, to connect with his finally opportunity.

In Casey's final chance to succeed for his team, he is met with an adversary unlike any he has ever faced: technology in the game of baseball. The final pitch of the imaginary at bat is the first actual change to the game of baseball. In Casey's first at bat, discussed in Chapter I, the three examples did not attempt to change the game itself. The Black Sox Scandal, the moving of the franchises, and the Labor Strike were major events in the history of baseball, but none of

them changed the game of baseball. Those events happened to the game's players, owners, and fans, but the game itself remained in tact. Additionally, the first two strikes in his imaginary at bat, PEDs in baseball and analytical research, are merely changing the players and coaches who play the game and strategize about the game. Some of the players who had taken steroids gained an advantage during their time playing, but the mound was still 60 feet 6 inches away from the plate and the bases were still 90 feet apart. The advanced metrics also changed part of the game because the information led to player insights on where to stand in the field and scouting reports helping hitters to gain probability of where a pitcher would likely throw the ball. But again, the fundamental rules of the game had not changed. The true difference in this final strike is that it is the first change to the game of baseball. Long after those who gambled on the game or took steroids leave baseball, those particular impressions will not change the essence of game. However, the addition of instant replay in the game will forever change the way the game is played.

There are inherent problems with changing the rules of baseball, more so than other sports. Of America's four major team sports, baseball is the only game without a defined time; for over a century, there has been no clock in baseball. Although there have been electronic scoreboards for decades, the fact that baseball does not require a clock means that it does not require technology for the game to be played. A team down by multiple runs in the ninth inning with two outs can still come back, just like Casey's Mudville. In the other major sports, athletes are battling time just as much as they are battling their opponents.

Recently, baseball has begun to implement various forms of technology into the game. The incremental additions have been slow compared to other sports' standards, but are also moving very quickly for traditionalists. To best understand technology in baseball, first, there

needs to be a review of the modest rule changes in baseball through the new millennium, prior to instant replay; then there needs to be general understanding of technology across other major American sports; next a review of Major League Baseball's incremental additions of instant replay; and finally, the philosophical impact of technology in baseball through the lens of media ecology.

Minor Changes to the Game Prior to Technology

Dating back to the late 1840s, the game of baseball began with rules changing on a regular basis. In fact, up through the 1920s, many of the basic rules of the game were still being decided: four balls became a walk in 1889; largely padded gloves, now just known as catcher's mitts, were permitted for catchers beginning in 1891; cork was added to the center of the baseball in 1910; and in 1920 spitballs were outlawed (*Baseball-Almanac*). However, since 1932, there have been few changes to the game's play on the field. *Baseball-Almanac* notes that there were only a total of 14 fundamental rule changes to the game of Major League Baseball from 1932-2008. Three of the 14 were regarding the statistic of a Save, which occurs when a pitcher who finishes a game for the winning team under certain prescribed circumstances ("MLB Miscellany: Rules, regulations and statistics," 2015). Three more dealt with equipment, two for gloves and one for the introduction of the batting helmet. Two of the rule changes deal with what a pitcher could or could not physically put on a baseball including a stricter spitball rule and the legalization of cowhide when there was a shortage of horses. Also, one rule standardized the minimum dimensions of a park (325/400/325). And finally, a rule dealt with minimum standards for individual championships were outlined. These 10 examples are nuances that help to refine the rules for statistical purposes, new equipment, a standardized playing field, and a clearly defined championship system. More than a changing of rules, these had more to do with actually

defining rules. So, with these 10 examples in one category, that means there were only four other rule changes in a 76-year time frame.

Each of the remaining four rule changes were significant and each directly impacted the game. The first group of changes helped to refine existing rules or to better restrict what a player could or could not do. The next four rules are all modifications that have the potential to change the actual play on the field.

Prior to the 1969 season, the league made two major changes to the game: 1. The mound would be lowered from 15" to 10" and 2. The strike zone was shrunken to the area from the armpits to the top of the batter's knees (*Baseball-Almanac*). First, there was the height of the mound. From 1904-1968, the height of the mound was 15" off the ground. The thinking is that the higher the pitcher's mound is, the more the pitcher will have an advantage due to the angle of the ball. Although there was a standardize height of the mound, there are many reports that claim each park had varying heights, depending on what the team preferred. Many claim it was the 1968 season of Bob Gibson, where he posted a 1.12 ERA, still the lowest mark since 1915, which caused the league to make two rule changes in one year. There were 21 pitchers in 1968 who posted a 2.50 ERA or lower. To put that in context, there have been only 22 instances[22] of a pitcher achieving that feat from 2011-2015 (*FanGraphs*). By lowering the mound, the batters received a distinct advantage.

The second change, shrinking the strike zone, was another benefit to the batters. Now, pitchers would have to throw in a smaller zone for pitches to be deemed a strike. In 1968, the league walk rate was 7.6%; the rate rose to 9.2% the following year in 1969, the highest rate

[22] Only one player has accomplished the feat of a sub 2.50 ERA in the past five seasons: Clayton Kershaw. Kershaw has posted an ERA lower than 2.50 four of the past five years, making up four of the 22 instances (*FanGraphs*).

since 1956 (*FanGraphs*). More walks allowed would lead to more base runners, which would ultimately lead to more runs.

The two changes shifted the game from a pitcher's game to a batter's game, meaning that the new rules would greatly favor the batter. The effects of the two new rule changes were felt immediately. In 1968, the league averaged 3.42 runs per game, and the league averaged 4.07 runs per game in 1969 and 4.34 runs per game in 1970 (*Baseball-Reference*). The 1970 average marked the league high since 1962.[23]

These two changes were implemented to increase scoring in the game, and both found positive outcomes instantaneously. Additionally, perhaps it was the combination of implementing both changes in the same year that led to such results. Regardless, the league saw an area in the game that needed to be adjusted, and the league crafted new rules to best rectify the issue.

The third major change in baseball during this time frame was the introduction of the designated hitter (DH). There was a popular belief that more runs made the game more existing. So, in another effort to make baseball more viewer-friendly, the DH was an attempt to make baseball a hitter's game. The designated hitter is the term given to a non-fielding player named before the start of a game to be in the batting order, typically in place of the pitcher. The collective batting average of all pitchers from 1920 through 2015 is a pedestrian .165 batting average (*FanGraphs*). Given that pitchers rarely get on base, and even more rarely hit for power or steal bases, the league decided to introduce the designated hitter. This was, and still is, a controversial issue across baseball, so much so that only half of Major League Baseball uses the rule. The American League uses the DH, while the National League does not.

[23] Appendix E is a visual graphic that shows runs per game over the course of nearly 100 years.

Again, the intent was to stimulate the game by adding the potential for more run scoring. Specifically, Oakland A's owner Charlie O. Finley campaigned for the designated hitter after noticing American League attendance lagging behind the National League, and decided something had to be done (Rabinowitz, 2015). Since the two leagues operated autonomously until 2000, there was a vote that was passed in the American League (Markusen, 2013). The first season that the American League used the DH was in 1973 on a three-year trial period, and was voted in permanently in December of 1975 (2013).

Somewhat similar to advanced metrics versus traditional statistics, there are also two large camps on what should be done with the designated hitter in today's game. Some people believe there should be no designated hitter in either league, and pitchers should have to bat. Others believe the National League should adopt the designated hitter. Former Pittsburgh Pirate and current TV Broadcaster, Bob Walk, often uses the phrase "Ban the DH" when the Pirates play interleague games in American League parks (instances when both teams use the DH). A 2015 article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* echoes Walk's opinion (Bittner, 2015). On the other side, some believe it is only a matter of time before the National League adopts the DH (Spector, 2015). Spector writes: "If you're not ready for the designated hitter to be part of National League baseball, your time to get ready is getting shorter by the day. It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when, and more than that, it's a matter of how." The issue is debated through the media regularly; the argument is revitalized each time a pitcher gets hurt while batting. Most recently, ace pitcher Adam Wainwright[24] of the St. Louis Cardinals missed nearly the entire 2015 season; from April 26th through September 29th, Wainwright did not pitch (*Baseball-Reference*).

[24] Wainwright is currently one of the game's most dominant pitchers having finished either 2nd or 3rd in the National League Cy Young Voting four times in six years from 2009-2014 (*Baseball-Reference*).

Wainwright was injured running out a pop-up and later needed "surgery to repair a ruptured Achilles tendon" (Birenbaum, 2015). Despite his injury spurring more debate, Wainwright himself pleaded to keep the DH out of the National League (2015). The designated hitter is still an ongoing debate in baseball today, and even if the National League does adopt the DH, there is little doubt that the debate will not truly stop.

Regardless of an individual's view of the designated hitter, there is little doubt that the impact is still felt in the game today. Since the inception of the DH in 1973, the American League has averaged 199.48 more home runs per year than the National League (*FanGraphs*). Obviously home runs are a single facet of the DH, but nonetheless an extra hitter in a line up helps overall production.

Finally, the fourth and final change is detailing new rules for illegal bats: Suspension for three days became mandatory if batter were to hit a fair ball with a filled, doctored or flat-surfaced bat was implemented in 1975. Nearing the end of the 1974 season, there was an egregious case of a doctored bat:

> While with the Yankees, Graig Nettles had a bat shatter on a bloop hit on September 7, 1974 leading off the fifth inning of a game against Detroit. Explosive evidence revealed a doctored bat, stuffed with what appeared to be rubber balls and cork. The umpire took away Nettles' single and removed the bat from the game. The Yankees went on to win the game 1-0, owing their lone run to Nettles, who had hit a solo homer earlier in the second inning, perhaps with the same bat. Nettles stayed in the game and flew out to center in his last at-bat. He avoided suspension, maybe due in part to his claim that a fan gave him the bat and he said that while it wasn't a bat he ever used before, he picked it up by mistake in that game against the Tigers. (Wade, 2010)

Although the league denied the fact that Nettles was the sole reason for the rule change, it seems quite clear that there was a cause and effect relationship at play.

Al Rosen was also caught in the 1954 season, but not during a game, of doctoring a bat (Wade, 2010). It seems fair to assume that when there was an issue, the league chose to react. Since the rule change in 1975, there have only been five cases of a player using a doctored bat. The last instance was in 2003 when Sammy Sosa used a corked bat; he claimed that he mistakenly picked up a bat he normally used for batting practice (Weinberg, 2004). Considering that there have been no cases of doctoring bats in over a decade, this rule change is not a regular point of discussion.

Unlike that of the doctored bat, the other three rule changes are regularly debated. Despite making such few rule changes for such a long time, especially when considering the massive changes other sports undergo, it is clear that baseball has a fan base that is not accustomed to regular rule changes. There is something simple and pure about playing the same game that was played decades ago; perhaps by changing the rules, the game's essence will change as well.

Each of these four rules is important to the history of baseball. The first two shifted the focus from being a pitcher's game to a batter's game; the third was another attempt at bolstering offense; and finally, even though the league wanted more action, the fourth change was a way to ensure players were not cheating.

Remarkably, the 76-year span between 1932-2008 contained few major revisions to the rules of the game, and even fewer changed the play on the field. It is because of the storied history of baseball and the fact that the game has not undergone many significant changes that make the implementation of instant replay such an important change in the game. In a culture

that is not accustomed to or welcoming of change, major rule changes seem to threaten the ground in which the game was built upon. However, it should be considered that baseball's hallowed ground is unique when comparing it to other sports. More than just general rule change, the other three major American sports have made significant and substantial changes specific to technology.

Technology across Major American Sports

Instant replay is not only a part of most American sports, but it has become a major component, especially when viewing on television. Watching a replay to review if the initial call was correct is now the way that most sports are watched. Although instant replay's main purpose is to correct inaccurate calls on the field, there is no denying its popularity with audiences watching at home. To watch a sport on television is to watch instant replay. *The Wall Street Journal* conducted a study that found there is, on average, only 11 minutes of action in a typical football telecast, and there is 15 minutes of instant replays (Rudnitsky, 2014). As television contracts continue to rise, it is no wonder why telecasts are putting an even greater emphasis on showing the audience every possible view of an important play.

Additionally, instant replay changes the entire experience of watching sports. "Television's ability to review plays at the push of a button has transformed not only how we watch sports, but the manner in which sports are analyzed, coached, covered and remembered" (Saunders, 2013). The addition of instant replay is much more important than the calls on the field, because it also is able to craft a narrative around the game through good or bad calls. This is a way for viewers to actually participate in watching sports. Additionally, for a culture that has difficulty with attention span, the various angles help to engage audiences during down time.

Instant replay actually began long before its implementation into professional sports. In 1963, Tony Verna introduced what would later be called instant replay in an Army vs. Navy football game (Pinter & Raphelson, 2015). Using tape decks, Verna showed televisions first glimpse of instant replay, and television has never looked back. The simple concept of showing a replay during a game was monumental at the time, and is now ingrained upon all televised sports.

The first major sport to adopt replay was the National Football League. The NFL began to experiment with the idea of instant replay in 1976, when Art McNally, then the director of officiating, wanted to find out how long a video review would delay a game ("History of Instant Replay," 2013). Although there was the possibility of correcting inaccurate calls, even at the onset there were concerns. In addition to the issue of wasting time, there was also a concern that stadiums were not equipped with enough cameras. Assistant Supervisor of Officials, Nick Skorich, noted that stadiums would "need a minimum of 12 cameras to get all the angels on every play" (2013). At the time, the technology was not ready to handle such a shift in the game. The technology was not yet advanced enough to be able to overturn calls on the field with any regularity.

However, the technology did increase in precision, and by the 1986 season, the NFL had implemented instant replay. At the time, only referees could initiate a replay review (2013). So, this meant that coaches could not request a replay. A replay was reviewed if multiple referees deemed the call on the field was questionable. The system would be guaranteed for one year, and then would be voted on again the following year. After a 23-4-1 vote prior to the 1986 season, the league approved instant replay moving forward with a 21-7 vote before the 1987 season

(2013). There was slightly less support of instant replay after its one-year trial run, but still enough support to approve the rule moving forward.

From a communication ethics stand point, there is also something being lost in the advent of instant replay. In its inception, instant replay was used primary to change egregiously bad calls. But more than just changing a rule, instant replay changed the way the game of football was played. Technology is changing sports' theoretical form of practice. As football was the first to adopt instant replay, they were also the first to make a shift from human beings making decisions to technology aiding those decisions.

Even after instant replay's implementation in football, there were some purest who did not think that it enhanced the game. However, the proponents of instant replay far exceeded its opponents. Other sports, then, began to look at the possibilities of instant replay. In 1991, the National Hockey League introduced instant replay for all goals (Miles, 1991). Although the NHL has made small additions to instant replay over the years, reviewing goals is still its major function. To date, the NHL still does not allow instant replay for penalties.

Again, as technology was introduced into another sport, the sport itself was changed. Communication ethics may seek to find out what is being protected and promoted at a time of difference. The pace of the game changes when time is stopped to check for instant replays. Although getting the call correct is important, the game's internal pacing changes. Perhaps this is turning away from a cornerstone of the game of hockey.

The next major step forward for instant replay was dealing with the NFL once again. Beginning in 1999, coaches could use "challenges" on questionable plays, making many plays reviewable by referees. Prior to this advancement, both the NFL and the NHL had systems in place; however those systems were still governed by the referees. Yet with the NFL's new

augmentation, the coaches, and in essence the teams, had control over instant replays. The coach challenge was one of the most important changes to the history of instant replay. When officials and referees were the judges, the major concern was to correct blatant mistakes; however, coaches being able to challenge plays could occur even when plays did not warrant a review.

Again, there are implications to communication ethics with the addition added by the NFL. From the onset, it was the referees who could initiate a replay review. However, with coach challenges come an entirely new form of expansion. The narratives and roles, then, change, and the sport takes on new dimensions. These advances are in line with efficiencies and progress, but not of the history of the sport or even the spirit of the sport.

Over the years, technology became better and so did instant replay. High-definition cameras, enhancement of camera placement, and a greater number of angles led to these advancements. After the 2001-2002 season, the National Basketball Association started using instant replay for last-second shots to ensure the ball left a player's hand with time remaining on the clock (Allen, 2010). Since the early 2000s, the NBA has also made additions and changes to their instant replay system.

Similar to both the NFL and the NHL, the NBA's implementations changed part of the game. There becomes a shift away from the games themselves to sports being driven by technology. As technology continues to develop and becomes further engrained on sports, technology itself will become part of the game's essence. Echoing Arnett's call, is technology what these games wish to "protect and promote"?

Each one of the three other major sports used and expanded the use of instant replay over time in hopes for better advancements. Tony Verna's version of replay could have never included all of the intricacies instant replay contains today. There are now more cameras filming

more angles, more camera persons filming shots, more video editors finding the best angels, and the technology continues to improve to show crisp, clear shots on questionable plays.

Instant replay is being enhanced from the technological end year after year, and the three other major American sports show that rules are being added over time. One of the fears that delayed the implementation of instant replay in baseball was that it could become a slippery slope. Multiple articles written about NFL's instant replay are campaigning for coaches to be allowed to challenge any call instead of the list of potential calls outlined by the NFL rulebook (Florio, 2015; Clayton, 2015). Even the NFL, the league that introduced instant replay and has the most progressive and comprehensive instant replay system in American sports, is being pushed toward more calls being determined by technology than by referees. If baseball did begin using an instant replay system, what would happen next? If MLB decides to review some plays and not all plays, wouldn't there be an outcry for more technology in the game? From a traditionalist's standpoint, if MLB does not use any instant replay, then there will not be a time where instant replay gets expanded in the game.

Also, it should be noted that there are many other effects to the games, far beyond the surface comments. Fred Bowen, columnist and author of 19 sports books for kids, writes about his concerns with instant replay:

> But the more important reason I don't like instant replay in any sport is that it sends a terrible message to kids. That message is that the game is not fair unless every call is correct.
>
> The much better message — and the important lesson that sports can teach kids — is that bad calls happen in sports, just as bad things happen in life. Players, both pros and kids, have to learn to shake off the bad calls or bad breaks and continue to do their best.

(Bowen, 2014)

Bowen's claim is that there is more to sports than getting every call right. In fact, sometimes being a good sport even when calls are bad can be "more important lesson for kids to learn" (Bowen, 2014). This unique perspective is intriguing because this is not a common used claim when debating instant replay, but perhaps this is something important for the future. When making any type of change, there can be effects that were not thought of at the time of the change; and when dealing with technology, sometimes change becomes amplified because of the steady and rapid permeation of technology within our culture. There are also many more claims like Bowen's, providing long-term effects of current changes, and those should be considered before making changes.

In addition to the slippery slope of instant replay, the two initial concerns of instant replay were lacking the appropriate technology and extending play/wasting time. However, modern day technology has exceeded most people's expectations after Vera televised a replay of a touchdown. Additionally, the other major sports go to great lengths to cut-down on the time spent on replay in a given game. With the available technology and the consciousness to ensure that replay would not lengthen games, why didn't baseball implement instant replay earlier? One of the main reasons for that is because the game baseball is embedded in tradition and has rarely opened itself to drastic change.

Technology in Baseball

Outside of one extenuating circumstances in 1999, instant replay was not implemented in Major League Baseball until midway through the 2008 season. Although the technology had been available to baseball for years, as it was for other sports, many worried about changing the pace of game; this was also one of the original concerns with the NFL. However, the pacing of

the game was not the only concern with instant replay. Bruce Weber, contributor of *The New York Times*, explained the situation:

> The chief argument in favor of instant replay is that it preserves the integrity of the game, that athletes work too hard and are too good at what they do to have their skills and the nature of their competition marginalized by the human frailties of ostensibly lesser mortals who sit in judgment of them. Of course, the games existed perfectly well with their integrity perfectly intact before anyone ever uttered the phrase, "Let's go to the videotape." (2008)

Weber notes that the game of baseball was a good sport before instant replay, and asks if it actually needs to be changed. Additionally, Weber questions the integrity argument by positing that domed stadiums and artificially surfaced fields each put baseball's integrity on the line (2008). Many worried that instant replay would also change the essence of the game, and with it, break with tradition.

Yet, regardless of the issues that some took with the rule change, the game still wished to move forward. In 2008, Major League Baseball implemented the use of replay in a moderate fashion: only home run balls could be replayed, meaning the only instances in which could warrant replay were ones when a ball was not clearly a home run (it could be a double, a home run, or a foul ball depending on where the ball was hit).

Commissioner Bud Selig made his statement after the official implementation of instant replay in baseball: "I believe that the extraordinary technology that we now have merits the use of instant replay on a very limited basis," Selig said. "The system we have in place will ensure that the proper call is made on home run balls and will not cause a significant delay in the game" (Curry, 2008). The Commissioner's original stance is telling: instead of boasting about the

advancement for baseball, he seems to express caution and care. Even in his initial statements, it is clear Selig is attempting to assuage the strong feelings of those who were against instant replay in the game.

Outside a few unique instances where no definitive call could be made, instant replay on home run balls seemed to be a success. Since the entire instant replay system was focused on home run calls, the interruptions to the game were few and far between. In fact, the first 13 instant replay reviews all showed correct home run calls. It was not until May 13, 2009[25] that the first home run call was overturned ("Instant Replay," 2015). Despite the success of instant replay, Major League Baseball did not make another change for six seasons. After a modest amount of instant replay was successfully added into the game, Major League Baseball made new additions to the rules prior to the 2014 season.

The major change in instant replay was that managers were now allowed to "challenge" a set number of plays within the game, somewhat similar to the NFL's rules. A manager could challenge one play per game, and if the first challenge resulted in an overturned call, and the manager was right, he was granted one additional challenge. However, this did not mean that a manager could challenge any play on the field. Only certain plays were reviewable:

- Ground-rule doubles
- Fan interference calls
- Boundary calls (however, managers may not challenge home run or potential home run calls)
- Force plays at all bases, except whether a middle infielder touched second base during the attempt to "turn" a double play

[25] Pittsburgh Pirate, Adam LaRoche had a ball called a home run, but was reviewed and overturned to a double. LaRoche agreed with the call.

- Tag plays on the base paths—whether a runner was tagged or whether the runner touched a base (an appeal is still required ahead of the latter)
- Fair/foul calls on balls hit into the outfield
- Catch/trap calls on balls hit into the outfield
- Time plays (whether or not a run scored prior to the third out)
- Whether a runner passed a preceding runner
- Scorekeeping issues, including the count, number of outs, score or substitutions ("MLB clubs unanimously approve expansion of instant replay," 2014)

Although this list seems fairly extensive, there are many plays that were not reviewable. There are still a number of un-reviewable plays not specified above, including, but not limited to, the following: balls or strikes, obstruction, interference, the infield fly rule, and check swings.

There was a six-year lapse between 2008 and 2014 for instant replay revisions and updates. However, due to such drastic changes to the game, there were some modifications before the 2015 season. The following adjustments would be made:

- Managers may now invoke instant replay from the dugout and will no longer be required to approach the calling umpire to challenge a call. Managers may hold play from the top step of the dugout by signaling to players and the home plate umpire that he is considering a challenge. A decision can be communicated verbally or with a hand signal. To challenge an inning-ending call, managers will be required to leave the dugout immediately in order to hold the defensive team on the field.
- Whether a runner left the base early or properly touched a base on a tag-up play will be reviewable.
- A manager will retain his challenge after every call that is overturned. Last year, a

manager retained his challenge only after the first overturned call.

- A manager must use a challenge in order to review whether a play at home plate included a violation of the rule governing home plate collisions. However, in the event that a manager is out of challenges after the start of the seventh inning, the Crew Chief may still choose to review whether there was a violation of the rule.
- During Postseason games, regular season tiebreaker games and the All-Star Game, managers will now have two challenges per game.
- Instant replay will not be utilized during 2015 Spring Training, but it will be in place for exhibition games at Major League ballparks prior to the start of the 2015 regular season. ("MLBPA, MLB announce pace-of-game initiatives, replay modifications," 2015)

Again, although these seem extensive, the 2015 modifications were fairly modest. Most of these updates were clarifications on existing rules, few of these resulting in any new, drastic change. The manager motioning from the bench would be used as a minor time saver. Managers retaining their challenge as long as they were right would rarely affect the overall time of the game because only in very rare situations would umpires be wrong more than two times in one game. The Postseason rule was a way to enhance the importance of Postseason play, and the addition of instant replay in Spring Training would allow players to get used to using the system year-round. The home plate collision[26] was instituted prior to the 2014 season and stated that runners cannot initiate contact at the plate and the catcher must provide a lane for the runner to score; all calls are left to the judgment of the home play umpire. The rule augmentation in 2015 made it

[26] Many believe this rule was implemented due to superstar catcher Buster Posey breaking his leg when runner Scott Cousins collided with him on a play at the plate. Some deem this "The Buster Posey Rule" (Morosi, 2014).

mandatory for a challenge to take place if a team thought that an opposing player was violating this rule. Finally, the only true addition to the list of reviewable plays was to be able to challenge whether or not a player left a base early when tagging up on a fly out.

The changes to the game were precise, calculated, and also assessed. One of the major differences between Major League Baseball's implementation of instant replay and other sports' is that baseball added pieces at a time, and then reviewed and assessed those pieces to ensure they were serving the game and the players well. This is not necessarily about continuing to expand instant replay, but instead to better define rules and ensure that the technology is serving its purpose.

Although many people associate instant replay with all technology in baseball, there have also been some technological additions that do not deal with instant replay. Major League Baseball also has undergone pace-of-game initiatives. Similar to the instant replay changes, baseball's pace-of-game initiatives have been modest and incremental.

At this point, there have been two major rule changes. The first requires batters to keep one foot in the box: The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:

(i) The batter swings at a pitch;

(ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;

(iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";

(iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;

(v) The batter feints a bunt;

(vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;

(vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or

(viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals. ("MLBPA, MLB announce pace-of-game initiatives, replay modifications," 2015)

The ongoing issue that had been occurring that ultimately led to this rule was that many players were slowing down the pace of the game, some in an attempt to get a pitcher out of rhythm, causing the game to be unnecessarily long.

Now, if a batter intentionally leaves the box, there is an actual penalty. However, since umpires can use their best discretion, most will normally warn the batter without any penalty. If a batter leaves the box multiple times or is deemed by the umpire as intentionally slowing down the game, the umpire has the authority to call a strike without a pitch being thrown. Although MLB is committed to streamlining baseball, allowing umpires to make judgment calls on these infractions instead of making them automatic and rigid is a way of protecting and promoting the game's tradition.

Additionally, it is not as though the MLB did not plan and prepare for this change. One important note on this is that Minor League Baseball implemented this pace-of-game initiative in the 2014 season. So, baseball was using the minor leagues as a piloting system to ensure that the new rule could work without problems.

The second rule change in the pace-of-game initiative is the addition of a time clock. This component will "measure non-game action and break time between innings and pitching changes during each Major League game" ("MLB announces pace of game initiatives, replay modifications," 2015). Immediately following the third out of an inning, time clocks will begin counting down from 2:25 for locally televised games and from 2:45 for nationally televised

games. Two time clocks have been installed at each park. Listed below is the schedule that both players and umpires are to follow:

Time Remaining: Activity

40 Seconds: PA announces batter and begins to play walk-up music

30 Seconds: Pitcher throws final warm-up pitch

25 Seconds: Batter's walk-up music ends

20 Seconds-5 Seconds: Batter enters the batter's box

20 Seconds-0 Seconds: Pitcher begins motion to deliver pitch ("MLB announces pace of game initiatives, replay modifications,"2015)

The first warning is when 40 seconds are remaining on the clock. At this point, "walk-up music" will begin and a batter's name will be announced. This is a clear indicator at the impact of technology within the game. Withholding comments on instant replay and pace-of-game initiatives, there is a pervasiveness of technology within the game of baseball. This includes the jumbotrons, the scoreboards, the televisions around the park, the PA system, and the technological entertainment in-between innings. Both the beginning and the end of a batter's walk-up music are listed in the official rules.

The walk-up music may be important to the fans, but it does not change the game of play. However, the next rule about warm-up pitches, does affect pitchers. Instead of a set number of warm-up pitches in between innings, which used to be eight, pitchers will now be permitted to throw as many or as few as they please within the time frame. When the clock hits the 30-second mark, a pitcher will be allowed only one more warm-up pitch (2015). Also, although the clock gives the feeling of a very rigid rule, umpires will be able to make exceptions, particularly if a pitcher or catcher makes the final out of an inning (2015). Much like the first initiative that

requires batters to stand in the batter's box, there is a portion of the rule that is left to the home plate umpire's discretion.

Another rule that affects the play on the field is at the 20-second mark: Batters will be encouraged to enter the batter's box (2015). Notice that both the first initiative for the pace-of-game enhancements as well as the second involve batters in the batter's box; this has clearly become one area that baseball has researched and concluded can save time to help streamline the game. Both the pitcher and the batter should be ready with 20 seconds remaining on the timer, and must be ready before the clock hits zero. "Batters who do not enter the box prior to five seconds remaining on the timer and pitchers who do not begin the motion to deliver the pitch prior to zero seconds remaining on the timer will be deemed to have violated the break timing rules" (2015). This rule puts the burden on both the pitcher as well as the batter.

The newly implemented rules are enforced through a warning and fine system, with discipline resulting for "flagrant violators" (2015). To help smooth this transition, the rules carried no fines during Spring Training or in April of the 2015 regular season. After April, penalties would be in affect. However, a *New York Ti*mes article noted, "it was not as clear how much discipline had been doled out" (Casey & Berkman, 2015). Although Greg Bouris, the chief spokesman for the union, alluded to fines in general, the number of offenders and the fine amounts are both currently undisclosed (2015). Major League Baseball must enforce rules to ensure that everyone plays by the same rules, but the objective is not to fine players. The focus of the objective was to streamline baseball, not to fundamentally change the game.

At this time, only two pace-of-game initiatives have been added to the game. More importantly, both of the initiatives deal with "non-game action." Brian Lam, who represents the Major League Umpires, stated: "These strides to hone the pace of game over time will improve

the natural rhythm of baseball" ("MLB announces pace of game initiatives, replay modifications," 2015). Lam's quote is unique insofar that it alludes to baseball finding "natural rhythm" through technology. The quote's concept can be linked to a metronome for a musician: the steady clicks help the natural pacing and allow music to occur organically.

The effects of the two new implementations were immediately felt. "For the most part, Major League Baseball's new pace-of-game initiatives were a huge success last season. The new changes hardly impacted games, and the time of the average contest dropped by six minutes" (Cwik, 2016). The goal of the initiatives was to shave time without interfering with the game, and the early results are suggesting that the initiatives are working.

Additionally, Robert D. Manfred, Jr. produced his public statement on the changes: "These changes represent a step forward in our efforts to streamline the pace of play. The most fundamental starting point for improving the pace of the average game involves getting into and out of breaks seamlessly. In addition, the batter's box rule will help speed up a basic action of the game" ("MLB announces pace of game initiatives, replay modifications,"2015). As this was one of Mandred's first orders of business as Major League Baseball's Commissioner, it seems as though this may be on step forward in an ongoing process to "streamline the pace of play." The initial changes could potentially expand in the future.[27]

One of the reasons that this issue was on the top of Mandred's prior list was because the pace of play was getting negative media attention. Immediately after the 2014 season, many writers noted that the average time of a baseball game was three hours and two minutes, the first

[27] In January of 2016, Major League Baseball officials and their union counterparts discussed possible additions to pace-of-game initiatives that could be implemented before the 2016 season (Sherman, 2016).

time in recorded history (officially recorded times started in 1920) that an average game[28] was more than three hours.

Both the instant replay changes and the pace-of-game initiatives are major shifts when trying to think about the history of baseball. Moving forward and changing is inevitable, but preserving the past while changing is much more complicated. To preserve the essence of baseball while still ongoing changes will require attentiveness to what the game should protect and promote and ways to avoid extremes.

Understanding the Place of Technology in Baseball

Depending on perspective, some may say that baseball has undergone more changes in the past two years than it did in its previous 80 years. Regardless if a person believes that to be a good thing or a bad thing, the findings continue to come back with positive results: Cwik (2016) notes that games were on average six minutes shorter in 2015, which is remarkable especially since scoring was higher than it was in the two years prior.

It is much more likely for baseball to continue to revise and expand upon existing rules regarding instant replay and pace-of-game changes than for the game to revert back to a game without these technologies. As the game perpetually changes, there becomes a constant struggle to find ground, to hold on to one's tradition, and to promote and promote its values. Additionally, the concerns about technology in baseball reach far beyond the diamond. As the technological age continues to push forward, there are many who call for reflection rather than immediate action.

One must ask: What are the effects of new technologies? Media Ecology scholar, Neil Postman, claims that technology "does not invite a close examination of its own consequences"

[28] It is worth noting that those metrics are based off of nine-inning games, so extra inning games are not driving up the total.

(1992, p. xii). So, if technology will not monitor itself, it becomes the duty of the people to examine its consequences. In Postman's work *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology,* he attempts to understand the impact of technology, he warns against acceptance without reflection of new technology, and he calls action to those who will be "resistance fighters" against technology's pervasiveness on the world. One of the ongoing threads in the book is the notion of examination of new technologies.

This concept can be readily applied to baseball because technology has been added to a game that was created and played without technology; this means that the technology is not inherent to the game, but rather is an addition to promote efficiency. Postman's work was not intended to be applied to baseball, in fact, Postman passed away before instant replay was introduced into the game. However, the concepts and the philosophy behind his work show clear and strong connections to the precarious state of a game of baseball after the implementation of technology.

One of Postman's major themes is about the notion of Technopoly. "Technopoly is a state of culture. It is also a state of mind. It consists in the deification of technology, which means that the culture seeks its authorization in technology, finds its satisfactions in technology, and takes its orders from technology" (1992, p. 71). Postman is working from a paradigm in which considers technology as a foregone conclusion; it is not a matter of if, but when. That concept is closely tied to instant replay in baseball. Although baseball did wait longer than the other three major sports in America to implement technology, perhaps it was just a matter of time before it became inevitable. As other sports used instant replay successfully and made additions, people waited for baseball to take a step forward into the technological age. As Technopoly becomes more pervasive in culture, it becomes even harder to escape.

Technology, though, is not all good nor is it all bad. “Every technology is both a burden and a blessing; not either-or, but this-and-that” (pp. 4-5). When thinking about instant replay in baseball, one should consider both what is gained as well as what is lost. With instant replay comes more accurate calls and efficiency, but technology also degrades some of the integrity of the game and changes the tradition of the game. In the technological age, many people are quick to point out the advancements. Technology can make life easier. However, there should also be considerable time spent on identifying and understanding what will be lost when choosing to use a new form of technology.

One of the other things that could potentially be lost in baseball through technology could be the game’s essence. There are potential changes to the way in which the game is played, thought of, and understood: manager challenges become a skillset; there is a severing between the past before the game did not use technology and the present; and through these changes, the way in which baseball is understood may change. The tool of technology becomes fundamental to the game instead of merely tangential. Postman laments over technocracy in his book, where tools become central to the thought-world (p. 28). Instead of tools being used as tools, Postman claims that tools “attack culture” and attempt to become culture itself (p. 23). In application to baseball, Postman may fear that instant replay and pace-of-game changes will overhaul the sport. Rather than aid in efficiency, accuracy, and streamlining, perhaps the technology will become central to the game itself and find a way to undermine what made the sport great.

Most importantly, there is the idea that the implementation of technology will separate the game from its tradition and lose ground to what the game protects and promotes.

> Technocracy gave us the idea of progress, and of necessity loosened our bonds with tradition—whether political or spiritual. Technocracy filled the air with the promise of

> new freedoms and new forms of social organization. Technocracy also speeded up the world. We could get places faster, do things faster, accomplish more in a shorter time. Time, in fact, became an adversary over which technology could triumph. And this meant that there was no time to look back or to contemplate what was being lost. (Postman, 1992, p. 45)

Postman understands that latching on to technology may mean to stray from tradition. Also, it is clear that Postman is linking the themes of technological progress and time.

When thinking about the newest initiatives to baseball, it is clear they are dealing with the element of time. Instant Replay was rejected on the premise that it would lengthen games; however, when that argument was quelled, instant replay was added. Many people wanted to ensure umpires made the "right" call, but were not willing to concede longer games. Additionally, the pace-of-game initiatives are focused on speeding up the game in hopes that technology will "triumph" over time. Postman warns against this mode of thinking because without the proper reflection, baseball may give too much power to technology. That does not mean there is no alternative. "To every Old World belief, habit, or tradition, there was and still is a technological alternative" (p. 54). The question is not whether or not there is a technological advancement for baseball, it is if there is a technological advancement that will protect and promote the ideals of the game.

Although Postman is considered a technological determinist, a position that presumes that society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values, he proposes an option for those combating technology. Postman's proposed solution to a culture with "rights without responsibilities" is to become a "technological resistance fighter" (p. 185). This is a call to distance one's self from the thought-world to hopes to criticize and modify it (p.

199). This is to say there must be literal distance from the technology to attempt to modify the thought-world.

Postman's work rejects the idea that because we can we should. Instead, Postman is more concerned with the "ought." Postman states:

> We had learned *how* to invent things, and the question of *why* we invent things receded in importance. The idea that if something could be done it should be done was born in the nineteenth century. And along with it, there developed a proud belief in all the principles though which invention succeeds: objectivity, efficiency, expertise, standardization, measurement, and progress. (1992, p. 42)

Along with technology comes an entire set of standard practices and principles. One of the major concerns with implementing technology into a function that was once done without technology is that there are ongoing implications to its addition. In the matter of baseball, we cannot possibly know all of the effects that technology will have on the game. Instant replay, time efficiencies, and all of the other minor changes will have lasting effects.

In its first year of the revised instant replay rules in affect, there have already been some unintended consequences. Billy Witz of *The New York Times* wrote an article in October of 2015, shortly after the season, entitled "Questions in Baseball Over Unintended Consequence of Instant Replay." Witz uses the example of stolen bases in which a player's foot comes off of the bag for a fraction of a second and is now deemed out by instant replay. Witz notes that instant replay was added "to correct calls that led managers into dirt-kicking, base-throwing, cap-tossing fits with umpires: a bang-bang play at a base, a ball that landed within a whisker of the foul line or foul pole" (2015). However, now the game has turned in to finding the footage. "Digging deeper can lead down a rabbit hole where truth and justice diverge" (2015). Again, this was not

the intent of instant replay, to dissect plays down to mere fractions of a second. Witz also notes instant replay issues with both the NFL and the NBA (2015). This is important because although there are immediate benefits of instant replay, there are also consequences to its implementation. Perhaps this would be echoing Postman's notion that after technology is engrained in a society, it becomes autonomous and becomes culture itself.

So, was the implementation of instant replay in Major League Baseball the best thing for the game? The simple answer is that there is no right answer. Using the tools of a given time to make the game better through efficiencies of time and accuracy in calls seems logical. Conversely, so does preserving tradition, a connection to the past. This is not an issue in which a correct answer exists, instead it is a study in identifying what a culture protects and promotes as form of the good. This is where Postman would require people to become technological resistance fighters, to help to evaluate and critique the given process in an attempt to understand the thought-world.

We live in a time of postmodernity: "Postmodernity finds definition in difference and incommensurability of views of the good" (Arnett, Fritz & Bell, 2009, p. 211). There is no meta-ethic in which the vast majority of people believe in. Rather, there are various understandings of good in our culture. To respond to a given historical moment, one must have a reflective response while also understanding one's ground in relation to others. Arnett speaks of a constructive hermeneutic in Arneson's book, *Exploring Communication Ethics: Interviews with Influential Scholars in the Field*:

> …my task is not to destroy someone's ground but to question with my own admitted limitations. That is why I made the move to a constructive hermeneutic that seeks implications; such a position is not naive but is reluctant to assume the modern premise

that I can stand above human history and proclaim truth for the misinformed. (2007, p. 61)

A constructive hermeneutic is the method of interpretation that seeks implications through learning with others; this method admits one's own limitations and does not presume to "proclaim the truth for the misinformed" (2007). This is especially important in a time of difference. One of the first questions that arise about instant replay is baseball is simple: are you for instant replay or are you against it? This myopic thinking misses any sort of middle ground. Additionally, with the emphasis put on learning, one can then review, learn, assess, and potentially reject another's viewpoint, but still have the ability to engage in a conversation.

This portion of the project is not attempt to choose a side. Instead, this can be seen as an evaluation of how and why technology has been implemented into baseball, how technology is currently being used in baseball, and a look ahead to the potential of technology expanding its uses in baseball. Using a combination of Postman's critical eye and Arnett's compassionate heart, one may find the mean between extremes.

Baseball did not introduce instant replay until 2008, six years after the NBA, 16 years after the NHL, 22 years after the NFL. MLB had vigilantly assessed other sports, reviewed their consequences of implementing technology, and also introduced instant replay in a very limited capacity to begin. Additionally, the expansion of instant replay did not occur immediately: not until the 2014 season did baseball make any changes. This is actually something that seems to be in line with Postman's thinking, taking a step back from technology. Major League Baseball was mindful about what it was doing, and also knew that some unforeseen consequences were bound to happen. So, to limit these consequences, baseball waited. Home run reviews were few and far between, and consequences were minor. For the most part, the initial implementation of instant

replay did not greatly change the game. And perhaps because the league waited an appropriate amount of time, there was a unanimous decision to expand instant replay ("MLB clubs unanimously approve expansion of instant replay," 2014).

Also, some reactions in sports are caused by an isolated incidence. On June 2, 2010, Armando Galarraga was a victim of the "most egregious blown call in baseball over the last 25 years" (Kepner, 2010). Some even say that it was the worst call in Major League History. After retiring the first 26 batters of the game, Armando Galarraga was just one out away from being just the 21st[29] pitcher to throw a perfect game[30] in Major League history. However, with only one out to go, Armando Galarraga forced Cleveland Indians' Jason Donald to bounce a ball to first baseman Miguel Cabrera. Cabrera fielded the ball cleaning and tossed to first base where Galarraga was covering. Although the replay clearly shows the throw beat the runner, umpire Jim Joyce ruled Donald safe, saying he beat the throw (Plutnicki, 2010).

For general fans of the game, this call was catastrophic. Since the first perfect game in 1880, there have only been 21 pitchers to ever accomplish the feat. Moreover, after Charlie Robertson's perfect game on April 30, 1922, the baseball world had to wait 36 years, 5 months, 8 days for its next perfect game[31] (*Baseball-Reference*). The blown call by Joyce helped to amplify the cries of those who wanted to immediately expand instant replay. Yet, instead of cowering to popularity, the game of baseball continued to wait patiently and assess the potential outcomes prior to its expansion of instant replay.

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[29] Three players have achieved the feat since June 2, 2010: Philip Humber (2012), Matt Cain (2012), and Félix Hernández (2012).

[30] A perfect game is defined by Major League Baseball as a game in which a pitcher (or combination of pitchers) pitches a victory that lasts a minimum of nine innings and in which no opposing player reaches base.

[31] Don Larson pitched the only postseason perfect game on October 8, 1956, Game 5 of the World Series.

Through the expansion of instant replay, its augmentations, and the pace-of-game initiatives being added, the game has evolved. There are three tactics in which MLB used that have aided in the transition of these expansions. First, the additions have been incremental, the additions have been warranted, and the additions have considered the essence of the game.

After the long wait from 2008 until 2014, baseball made its first major commitment to instant replay. However, because the game was able to learn from the other major American sports and because the game did not begin with drastic changes that would shift the game over night, it shows that there is a hint of reservation in additions. To have reservations is to protect and promote what is already there: the ground, the tradition.

Also, baseball has not (yet, at least) given the power to challenge any call. Most plays at bases[32] are reviewable; however check swings, balks, and balls and strikes are not reviewable (Hagen, 2015). Baseball seems to be understanding and admitting its own limitations. Also, MLB seems hesitant to fully embrace all aspects of technology. There are still parts of the game, calling balls and strikes for one, where the human element is still a part of the game's essence. The calls that are being reviewed often have definitive answers, whereas many of the calls that are not challengeable are judgment calls. Baseball still allowing the human element to have a place in the game is an example of the fact that there is more to baseball than technology can provide.

In this imaginary at bat, baseball was late to react to steroids, and Casey found himself down 0-1 in the count. Then, with the rise of advanced metrics, many ascribed to the new way of thinking without considering the consequences, and Casey's eagerness led to another strike

[32] One exception is the neighborhood play, where the second baseman catches the ball off the bag and throws to first base in an attempt to both avoid an incoming runner and complete a double-play, and is given credit for the force out — which is not reviewable by instant replay (Baer, 2014).

making the count no balls and two strikes. Digging into the dirt to find his ground, learning from his past mistakes, and keeping a vigilant eye on the on the task ahead, Casey swung a third time, but this time he connected.

Chapter V: Where Does Baseball Go From Here?

In the third and final pitch of Casey's imaginary at bat, he hit a home run. Casey's home run was not by luck or happenchance; instead, it was a product of reflection and learning from past mistakes. After the strike in 1994, the game of baseball was at a crossroads between tradition and greed. Many believed the game could never be the same. The strike "forever changed the course of history" (Nightengale, 2014). The strike was one of the most significant events in baseball history, but somehow the essence of baseball was persevered through the times that followed the strike.

To fully understand how the game was preserved through tradition and the ways in which the game can move toward its future, one must understand the significance of the major events that has happened since the labor strike. First, I will recap the three identified areas covered in this project including PEDs, advanced metrics, and technology in baseball including some of their ongoing threats to the game; then I will give a thorough critique of progress as it is understood in relation to Modernism; next, I will champion the notion of Aristotle's virtue ethics insofar as the mean can act as a compass for ethical issues; I will then expand the notion of virtue ethics as it applies to areas beyond baseball; and finally I will discuss ways in which baseball can be preserved for the next hundred years.

Recapping Casey's At Bat

The three identified areas in which helped to shape baseball since the strike of 1994 are performance-enhancing drugs, advanced metrics, and technology in the game of baseball. The game of baseball dealt with each one of these three situations in different manners, but each still attempted to preserve baseball. Also, each of the three areas is still being dealt with in some way today.

How the Steroid Era will truly be remembered is unclear. What is clear is that the Steroid Era is still impacting the game today. The ongoing skepticism of power hitters and the adjustment of expectations of players both still play a role in today's game. Each time a player tests positive for PEDs, it reopens the wound that steroids left. Additionally, players are unfairly judged because some hold players to the standards of players during the Steroid Era. Piazza and Bagwell were discussed in Chapter II for their bids for the Hall of Fame, but there are also others who are being unfairly judged because of PEDs. There are players today who have never taken PEDs, but are still being compared to players who did take PEDs and had inflated numbers because of it. When talking about a prospect with power potential, Josh Bell, General Manager, Neil Huntington of the Pittsburgh Pirates says:

> Pre-artificial enhancements, there was a natural maturation process to most power hitters. Most natural power hitters didn't hit 30 home runs in the Minor Leagues…Our eyes are skewed based on what we've seen over the last 15 or 20 years. There is some recurrence of what worked in the '80s and what worked in the early '90s working again as the game gets back to baseball. (Berry, 2016)

Expectations of players have changed as 30 home runs, 100 RBIs, and batting .300 is not very common in the current climate. There have only been 23 instances from 2010-2015 in which a player has hit 30 home runs, driven in 100 runs, and batted .300 or better. To put that into context of the Steroid Era, that feat was accomplished 26 times in the 2000 season alone (*FanGraphs*). The shifting scale makes it difficult for fans to adjust expectations.

Another way in which the Steroid Era continues to linger is through Hall of Fame ballots. Again, Piazza and Bagwell were discussed as men who were suspected of steroid use, but with no actual evidence; but what does it mean for those who have clearly been linked to PEDs by

failing a test or by admitting their use? There is obviously a clear distinguishing factor between players who are suspected of steroid use and those who have been confirmed users. Also, if some men who are merely suspected of steroid use are not reaching the Hall of Fame, then known steroid users would seemingly never get into Cooperstown. So far, that has been the case, but what about moving forward?

Baseball acted in deficiency at the onset of steroids in the game, but perhaps how the Baseball Writers' Association of America react now as known PED users are up for their chance at the Hall of Fame will change the perspective of how the game dealt with steroids as a whole. At this time, no known PED-users have been elected into the Hall of Fame.[33] As of the 2016 vote, Mark McGwire is no longer going to be on ballots in the future as he was not elected in any of the 10 seasons he was listed on the ballot. Also, Sammy Sosa only garnered 7% of the vote.[34] Barry Bonds and Rodger Clemens have each been on the ballot for four seasons, and both received over 40% of the vote, but players must receive 75% of the votes to be elected into the Hall of Fame. Nick Cafardo, *Boston Globe* baseball writer, is a registered voter of the BBWAA Hall of Fame. Cafardo discusses the 2016 Hall of Fame vote: "But the two greatest players of that era — Clemens and Bonds — still have a long way to go. And I'm not sure they're going to get there" (2016). McGwire and Sosa were both great players who had peak years of dominance, but neither is considered to be the greatest of all time. However, in the cases of Bonds and Clemens, they are in the upper echelon. Outside of the issue of steroids, there are no other reasons why either of these men should not be in the Hall of Fame.

[33] Washington, DC sportswriter Thomas Boswell, claims that there is a person in the Hall of Fame who he saw taking steroids, but has not identified the person (Neyer, 2015). Without legitimate proof, many dismiss this claim.

[34] A player must have at least 5% of the vote to remain on the ballot the following year ("BBWAA Election Rules," 2016).

The communication narrative that emerges is that people around the game of baseball (at least the writers) are still angry: angry for being lied to, angry for having look at tainted records, and angry for the sullying of the game of baseball. Bonds' career numbers put him next to men like Babe Ruth and Willie Mays (according to WAR[35]), while Clemens best compares to Cy Young, Walter Johnson, and Greg Maddux (according to WAR[36]). For these two players to be shunned from baseball's greatest honor is to show exactly how important this issue continues to be in the game.

Moving forward, writers and media outlets have a responsibility to uphold the sanctity of baseball. According to the official voting rules: "Voting shall be based upon the player's record, playing ability, integrity, sportsmanship, character, and contributions to the team(s) on which the player played" ("BBWAA Election Rules," 2016). There are six distinct components to the voting, and only three are in relation to a player's statists. The other three (integrity, sportsmanship, and character) are all to be considered as well, and those who used PEDs have played the game without integrity or sportsmanship and show poor character.

Over the next six seasons, Bonds and Clemens may find their way into Cooperstown, and that will be because of their statistics, not because of their integrity to the game. The voting for the Hall of Fame reminds viewers and participants that the game of baseball is about more than the statistics. As players like McGwire and Sosa are not granted acceptance into baseball's greatest honor, it is a reinforcing message that ethics matter in the game of baseball.

The emphasis on statistics is the driving force behind the second major shift since the strike: advanced metrics. Using new technology, producing new statistics, and evaluating players

[35] Bonds ranks second all-time with a career 164.4 WAR, behind Ruth (168.4), but in front of Mays (149.9) (*FanGraphs*).
[36] Clemens ranks first all-time with a career 133.7 WAR in front of Young (131.5), W. Johnson (117.1), and Maddux (116.7) (*FanGraphs*).

using big data are all great ways for the game to expand. By learning more about the game, one becomes open to new perspectives. However, the culture that surrounds the sabermetric movement seems to over-indulge on the new statistics. This can be seen in the excess of the applications of sabermetrics. To find new statistics and learn more about baseball helps to expand the game. However, to eliminate and disregard traditional statistics is shortsighted and highly presumptuous. New ideas can form when there is communication between the past and the present. Instead, the sabermetric movement seems to be focused on the constant pursuit of moving forward without bothering to look back at its past or down at its ground.

The major claim is that by having more statistics, we can then know more about the game. But many are so sure that advanced metrics are the answer that they are not looking ahead at potential threats to the game. In addition to the devaluing of traditional metrics, as discussed in Chapter III, there could also be other negative outcomes to the acceptance of advanced metrics. One of the threats to the game is by overvaluing and overpaying players teams may find that the metrics are not as stable as believed.

As of January 2016, there have been 45 position player contracts worth $100,000,000 or more. Three players received two contracts worth $100,000,000.[37] Of those 45 contacts, 43 meet one of the following four requirements: a player has hit at least 30 home runs in a season, a player has driven in at least 100 RBIs in a season, a player has batted at least .300 in a season, or

[37] Alex Rodriguez first received a recording breaking contract of $252,000,000 for a 10-year contract from 2001-2010, but then renegotiated with the New York Yankees to $275,000,000 from 2008-2010. Albert Pujols signed a contract with the St. Louis Cardinals for $100,000,000 from 2004-2010 with a club option for 2011. After being granted free agency after the 2011 season, Pujols signed with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim for $240,000,000 for 10 years. Finally, Miguel Cabrera signed an 8-year contract with the Detroit Tigers from 2008-2015 for $152,300,000. The contract was extended for an additional 8 years for $248,000,000. These are currently the only three instances where position players have received multiple $100,000,000 dollar contracts ("Highest paid players," 2015).

a player has stolen at least 30 bases in a season. In 1998, Alex Rodriguez did all four of those things by swatting 42 home runs, driving in 111 runs, batting .310, and stealing 46 bases (*FanGraphs*).

The first player to receive a contract of $100,000,000 and not reach any of those feats was Kyle Seager. Seager signed a deal with the Seattle Mariners for 7 years, $100 million dollars ($14,285,714 per year). However, the final year of his contract worth $15 million dollars is not guaranteed money; the team has a buyout clause (Divish, 2014). This means that there is only one player who is guaranteed $100 million dollars who has not met any of the criteria listed above: Jason Heyward.

Prior to the 2016 season, Jason Heyward received an 8-year, $184 million dollar contract ($23 million dollars per year). Additionally, Heyward has two opt-out opportunities (Brown, 2015), so there are actually two opportunities for him to make more money than his current contract. After Heyward accepted his contract with the Chicago Cubs, many people questioned if he was actually worth that much money:

> Heyward is a polarizing player in that he's a sabermetric dream who, apart from his defense, doesn't do that one single thing that propels him to the top of most lists as one of baseball's best players but is still good enough to be desired by every big league team regardless of whether he's categorized as elite or very good. (Lebowitz, 2015)

Lebowitz's article shows that there are those who believe he is not only worth the money, but perhaps Heyward is still one of the best players in the game despite the fact that "he's probably not going to lead the league in *any* category since he never has before" (2015). Although he does not track well with traditional metrics such as home runs, RBIs, batting average, and stolen bases, Heyward did post some excellent sabermetric numbers. In 2015, Heyward was the 11th

ranked offensive player according to WAR, 14th in Def,[38] and 2nd in URZ/150[39] (*FanGraphs*). These all point to Heyward being a premium defender, and an overall solid player. However, his traditional statistics do not show his value: Heyward was 95th in home runs, 97th in RBIs, 31st in batting average, and 15th in stolen bases (*FanGraphs*). According to old school ways of thinking, not only is he not an elite player, he is likely an average player at best.

This is an important contract for the history of baseball because this is based on the notion that advanced metrics are valid forms of measurement, so much so that a person is being paid like an elite player because of his sabermetric numbers. This is one way that advanced metrics are actually changing the game itself. Players are now being valued according to metrics that did not exist a decade ago, let alone a century ago. Instead of being a solid player with good range as an outfielder, the narrative constructed around particular metrics has made Jason Heyward into an elite talent worthy of making $184 million dollars. The reason that this poses a threat to the game is that if the metrics that suggest Heyward is an elite player are replaced in the next few years by new metrics that show him to be an average player, then the Chicago Cubs may regret extending such an offer. Advanced metrics as a field of study does prove to be legitimate, but specific metrics are more of a moving target. As one metric is replaced by a newer, more refined version, the game of baseball loses its reference point, its ground.

As the game continues to adapt to the culture around it, choices must be made. Accepting and promoting advanced metrics is already a part of the game, and the sabermetric movement will continue to grow. But there must be caution and warning before entire organizations buy-in

[38] Def stands for Defensive Runs Above Average which *"*the combination of two important factors of defensive performance: value relative to positional average (fielding runs) and positional value relative to other positions (positional adjustment)" (*FanGraphs*).
[39] "UZR/150 (ultimate zone rate per 150 games)**:** The number of runs above or below average a fielder is, per 150 defensive games" (*FanGraphs*).

to a system that is in its infancy and is continually changing. Similar to the advancements happening quickly, there will also be challenges moving forward with technology in the game.

Few people had the foresight to understand how drastically our world would change with technology. In the past 20 years, the entire world has transformed with various technologies. What, then, will the next 20 years hold? For the game of baseball, the focus needs to continue to remain steadfast on its aim to move forward for the betterment of baseball. Up until this point, the game has reacted in a conservative fashion toward technology compared to other sports, and should remain that way moving forward. Especially as the game reports successes on both instant replay and pace-of-game initiatives, there will continue to be those who urge for these trends to continue. However, maintaining a thorough and patient methodology will help to ensure that the game does not move forward too quickly without reflection.

The major issue that links all three of these areas is the notion of progress. The idea that what is new is better, and what is old is obsolete. For baseball to reclaim its essence, the focus needs to be on the present historical moment, the dirt underneath a player's cleats, instead of the false sense of progress.

A Formal Critique of Progress

As has been shown in previous chapters, having ground and tradition becomes paramount in making choices in the present. Without a connection to the past, one loses footing and can no longer push off from that ground toward its future. Baseball has had more than its fair share of issues, but attending to the historical moment can help the game overcome issues and endure. In many respects, progress runs in opposition to tradition; so, as the game of baseball attempts to cling on to its ground, its tradition, it is being propelled to move forward – in the name of progress – without consultation from the past. The concept of progress as a philosophical

framework is tied to Modernity. It will be necessary, then, to first have an understanding of Modernity in general and then to understand the place of progress in Modernity, prior to understanding the determents of progress on the game of baseball.

Modernity's reach is far beyond any single field of inquiry; instead, Modernity pervades nearly all aspects of culture. There are many different definitions and views of Modernity. Still, there seems to be a need to contextualize Modernity. Modernity deals primarily with the presuppositions and consequences of these two processes: "(1) *Rationalization* (development of market economy coupled with the rise of state bureaucracy and political participation), and (2) *Secularization* (disintegration of religious world view and creation of autonomous spheres of science, morality and art)" (Zunjic, 2015). The pillars of Modernity rest on rationalization and individualism. The major philosophical themes that emerge from Modernity are reason, science, and technology.

The history of Modernity is difficult to follow, and there is no defined timeframe when it began. But some believe that there is a clear affect of the era: "Modernity may…be described simply as the loss of certainty and the realization that certainty can never be establish once and for all" (Ritzer & Ryan, 2011, p. 480). Without the concept of certainty, people were relegated to dismissing religious worldviews and instead subscribing to science and rationality. There is the underlying notion that progress is the product of science and rationality. This is to say that by championing a life of science and rationality will ultimately lead to a better future.

Arnett finds that progress is one of modernity's key facets. "Modernity, understood not as a time period but as a secular religion, finds definition in a trinity of articles of faith: 'progress,' 'efficiency,' and 'individual autonomy'" (Arnett, 2013, p. 3). Each of components can be highlighted through the demand of technology. Technology will move forward, it will create

efficiencies, and it will allow for individuals to act with autonomy. However, the framework is flawed; perhaps moving toward efficiency and autonomy is not always the best option.

The notion of progress demands "consistent and ongoing improvement through the new and innovative" (p. 3). This becomes an ongoing theme throughout modernity: the constant pursuit of what is new. The promise of progress is bogus: it is linked to the idea that what is new is automatically better. Although some technological advancements have been to the betterment of culture, not every advancement has been better. Additionally, with the constant focus on improvement, one cannot deal with the demands of the historical moment.

It is my belief that the idea of progress is clouded by efficiency. In fact, many may even confuse the two terms. Many believe that if it is more efficient it is better, and thus the progress is holding true to its word. However, the "unchallenged assumptions of modernity" (p. 6) do not require or even ask for a true reflection of that progress. What does it mean to be efficient? And even if one achieves maximum productivity, what is lost?

In reference to baseball, if the game were driven only by progress, then instant replay would have taken over every aspect of the game. There would have been no incremental plan, but instead the game would have implemented the technology when it became available. The issue with this would be that there would not be an evaluation process. There would not be reflection or consideration for what could potentially be lost. There would be no consideration for the past or the game's traditions. In general, progress runs counter to tradition because it does not take tradition into consideration when moving forward. So, for the game of baseball, the constant push forward would be the only aim. The notion of progress without reflection seems like a captain of a ship without a compass, believing moving forward is better.

Modernism is a dated concept that simply stopped making sense. Now, in our postmodern age, people often look back at Modernism with a critical lens, at least from a philosophical sense. However, there are still aspects of our culture that operate on the assumptions of this dated concept, and technology is one such case. Many consumers buy new cell phones and other devices based on the newest model under the assumption that it is better than the previous model. In many cases, it might be better, but not always. Without reflection or connection to the past, there is no frame of reference, and with nothing to compare the new item to, the new item must always be viewed as best.

As writers and fans of baseball complain over the game's perceived reluctance toward new initiatives, remember that this traditional concept is actually quite revolutionary in our current society. Other aspects of our culture may more readily make changes, but baseball is entrenched in its traditions, grounded by its roots, and makes its changes after thorough review and consideration. The false promise of progress has been found out, so it is time for a new methodology.

Finding Ground: Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean

If one is to not be driven by progress, then one must have another decision-making tool. For this reason, I turn to Aristotle's text, *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which he discusses virtue ethics. In Book II of *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle deals with the notion virtue ethics. There are three distinct factors Aristotle uses that can be applied to the game of baseball: action, mean, and ethics.

First, in Book II, Aristotle notes the importance of repetition of action. Aristotle uses an analogy of art to make his point:

> …it is from and by acts of the same kind that all virtue has both its development and its decay, exactly as has all artistic skill. For it is by playing upon the harp that men become either good harpers, or else bad; and of masons, and indeed of all other craftsmen, the same rule holds good. For if men build well they will become good masons, and if badly bad. Were not this so, no art would have needed an apprenticeship, but men would have been either good craftsmen or else bad from the very first. And so, too, is it with the virtues. For, accordingly as we bear ourselves in our transactions with other men, so do we become either just or unjust; and, accordingly as we bear ourselves in dangers, and accustom ourselves to act as cowards or as brave, so do we become either cowards or brave. (Aristotle, pp. 36-37)

Aristotle's underlying point is that, regardless of profession, a person must act to be good at something, and that virtues are no different. Aristotle uses an example when speaking about Eudoxus: "his arguments gained strength rather from the excellence of his own character than from any intrinsic worth of their own" (p. 351). This is to say that a person's actions, their choices, ultimately are more important than any type of intrinsic value.

Relating this first component back to baseball, this would be to say that the game of baseball and those who are responsible for it might have good intentions, but ultimately actions matter. The actions of those who are responsible for the game are judged on their actions, nothing more. So it is through action that one can understand the character of the game itself. How the league has acted toward its challenges ultimately is a reflection on the game. Additionally, to act, one must be tied to a given historical moment, and to do so, one must have ground. Aristotle's call is not for metaphorical actions, but literal action in the lived-world. To act, one must be present and attentive to the present situation.

The second component is the mean. According to Aristotle, each of the virtues is a state of being that naturally seeks its mean relative to the individual – Aristotle calls the mean "the one common measure of all commodities" (p. 155). The virtuous habit of action is always an intermediate state between the opposing vices of excess and deficiency: to be in excess is wrong and to be in deficiency is also wrong. An individual then strives for the right kind of action, which always lies in the mean. This is to say that it is not enough to act, but instead to act according to the good.

Aristotle does not stop at the theoretical, though. He writes: "But we must not rest content with a statement thus purely general; we must also confirm it by an application to particulars" (p. 49). Again, this is a clear connection back to action – one must act and act according to the mean. Adapted below is a matrix with particular examples, along with the mean, excess, and deficiency of the example:

Example	Mean	Excess	Deficiency
with respect to acting in the face of danger	Courage	Rashness	Cowardice
with respect to the enjoyment of pleasures	Temperance	Intemperance	Insensibility
with respect to spending money	Generosity	Wastefulness	Stinginess
with respect to relations with strangers	Being Friendly	Being ingratiating	Being surly
with respect to self-esteem	Magnanimity	Vanity	Pusillanimity

(Kemerling, 2011)

The application of the theory of virtue requires flexibility. To begin, the actual terms used could be questioned. But more than just the terms, there are a number of cases in which the mean is closer to one side than the other. For example, friendliness is closer to its excess than to its deficiency, meaning that this particular mean is not in the middle of excess and deficiency. This

is important to note because this brings a much more textured view of excess and deficiency. Additionally, it should be noted that there are some examples that do not have clear excesses and deficiencies. There are some injustices such as rape, theft, adultery, and murder (Aristotle, p. 146) that have no mean. According to Aristotle, these are always unjust, and no not apply to the doctrine of the mean. Although the analysis may be complicated in some instances, the general plan of Aristotle's ethical doctrine is clear: avoid extremes of all sorts and seek moderation in all things (Kemerling, 2011). The concept is simple, but its application can be very difficult.

Using Aristotle's framework, this project evaluated the three threats to the game since the labor strike. The first two threats, PEDs and advanced metrics, missed the mark of the mean – the first by deficiency the second by excess. However, the third example of technology in baseball was able to find the mean. Although Aristotle's doctrine of the mean was the framework for this entire project, I acknowledge the fact that the means, which I identified and labeled, may not be universal standards. Perhaps to another person's scale, baseball could have succeeded with PEDs or advanced metrics according to a nuanced version of the scale. However, I maintain that Aristotle's aim is to limit excess or deficiency, and in that, I believe this project has delivered.

The third and final component to Aristotle's adapted methodology is the ethical framework. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is known best for the limiting of extremes. Many people use the term "The Golden Mean" to describe Aristotle's understanding of the mean. There are many other theorists including Aristotle's processors, Socrates and Plato, along well as Confucius who encourage people to avoid extremes. One of the most well known applications to avoiding extremes is in the children's story, "The Story of the Three Bears."

Robert Southey originally wrote the story in 1837. The story has undergone many

adaptations and revisions, and later focuses on the woman in the story, Goldilocks. In short, after three anthropomorphic bears leave their home, Goldilocks enters and eats their porridge, sits in their chairs, and lies down in their beds. Goldilocks finds that one bowl of porridge is too hot, one is too cold, and the third one is just right. Similarly, she finds the same issues with the chairs and the beds: one is too big, excess, one is too small, deficiency, and the third one is just right, the mean. Due to the extremes on both ends and the goal in finding of the mean, many people have linked "The Story of the Three Bears" with "The Golden Mean." This phenomenon has caused scholars such as SJ Martin (2011) to write works on the implication of what has been dubbed "The Goldilocks Principle."

Although there are definite similarities between the two, the true difference lies in the ethical foundation of Aristotle's work. There are some who may even believe that "The Story of the Three Bears" is a good example of "The Golden Mean;" however, it totally disregards Aristotle's emphasis on the ethical component. Completely essential to Aristotle's doctrine of the mean is its tie to the ethical. Aristotelian Ethics is conceived with the notion that finding the mean is good, and falling to either excess of deficiency is bad. The concept that there is a notion of the good relies on the idea that there is an ethical component to the methodology.

Moreover, it should be considered that there is a responsibility to act in some way, when under the umbrella of Aristotle's theory. In some ways, not acting would be viewed as deficiency, so even inaction can lead to an extreme. But the concept of acting and feeling responsible to act is an ethical concept. It is through the added ethical concept that finding the mean realizes its weight. In "The Story of the Three Bears," there is no real need for Goldilocks to act other than she wants porridge, would like to sit in a seat, and would like to rest in a bed. There is no inherent need for Goldilocks to act, whereas in ethical situations, Aristotle would

urge one to act according to the mean.

For the game of baseball, one could simply apply "The Goldilocks Principle" and seemingly get to the same end. However, as Aristotle writes, "not only must our analysis of the end into its means be correct, but also our impulse towards the end must be right" (p. 183). Although the outcome is important, so is the act/action itself. There must be a reason for action, and the way to reach that end must also be in line with the ethical framework Aristotle develops.

The ethical component was integral in the process for finding a methodology for this project because there is a responsibility, an ought, of those who make decisions for the game. Holding the game of baseball to different standards, this project conceptualizes the threats to the game as areas in which require action linked to ethics. Decisions must be made according to a methodology that holds individuals accountable for their actions, and continues to strive for the betterment of baseball.

Applications beyond Baseball

This project's modus operandi is centered on identifying threats to the game of baseball, evaluating the action/reaction to those threats, and assessing the ways the game is still dealing with each threat through the lens of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. This methodology could easily be used in areas outside of baseball. This does not limit this methodology to sports in general, either, but rather a much grander view.

Each of the three central areas dealt with in this project have also had a distinct overlap with technology: technology helped to create and distribute PEDs, technology helped to create systems to quantify advanced metrics, and obviously technological advancements have come so far that instant replay and time clocks are now part of the game of baseball. Technology, then, would be one area to consider for future projects. The scope would be in line with Harold A.

Innis' scope for *The Bias of Communication.* Innis highlights the importance of "the things to which we attend" and posits that when there are changes to communication there will also be changes in "the things to which we attend" (p. xliii, 2008). Like Innis, future uses of this methodology would have scopes that could be focused on forms of communication that change, because ultimately those are the things to which we attend.

Most of society's communication changes often derive through changes in technology. In our current society, technology is so rapidly changing, but few people are reflecting of the literal and philosophical implications. Additionally, most of the world thinkers who engage with such issues are social critics and media ecologists. Thoughtfully analyzing the world around us is a great thing, but both types of commentators do not regularly employ an ethical framework. More so than thinking about the technology, the ethical implies "the ought" to the discussion, and gives responsibility to those who use technology.

Specifically, there are three areas in which I believe could benefit from this type of methodology: education, music, and interpersonal communication. First, the educational landscape is drastically changing. More fully online programs are being developed in academia, but are they effective? A UC Davis study shows that "online courses at community colleges have been less successful than courses taught face-to-face" (Ung, 2015). Also, even though fully online programs are being more socially acceptable and credible (Haynie, 2014), many instructors are not ready to be great online teachers. In addition, since fully online programs were not around before the turn of the century, this is still a relatively new field. The initial data is coming in, but it is not near the amount of study that went in hundreds of years before. Perhaps it would be worth investigating online education in higher academics as the number of enrollees continues to grow.

Within the field of education, there are many facets that deal with technology that need to be better understood. Moreover, there are a few areas that deal with ethical dilemmas that would benefit from this methodology. Full-online students are now finding new ways to cheat. Not only are people buying papers, but also some students are having other people take the entire class for them (Newton, 2015). Although instructors are finding new ways to catch cheating students (Haynie, 2014), there is an ethical component to this. Reviewing academic integrity policies, the communication of those polices, and the effectiveness and the use of those policies is an interesting idea. If more students are finding new, blatant ways to cheat, schools need to be prepared to act to uphold the reputation of the department, the school, the discipline, and higher academics in general.

A second idea dealing with education and technology is introducing new technology into the virtual classroom. Many teachers feel the need to implement the newest technologies available to keep up with trends (Osika, Johnson, and Buteau, 2009). However, there are times when new technologies become trinkets instead of tools, and actually stunt education. A focus on progress is futile; rather than fixating on what is next, teachers must focus their primary goals on what is best for the discipline. Thus, misuses of new technology by instructors would be another area worth researching.

Then, there is also the concept of community in online classes. A 2008 study conducted by Vanhorn, Pearson, and Child identified the major communication challenges of online learning. Among the list of challenges is the lack of community.

> The lack of student interactivity can also affect the feeling of 'community' in the classroom. Students often feel isolated, as if they are taking an online course by

themselves, rather than being part of a learning community in which they can share ideas and experiences with each other. (2008, pp. 33-34)

The convenience of online classes is readily apparent to those who choose that path. However, there are ancillary detriments that many students do not think about prior to beginning fully online programs. The lack of a learning community in the physical sense is one that is clearly missed in the online world. There can be feelings of isolation amongst students, especially in asynchronous setups, the preferred method for most colleges. There is an opportunity to research this ongoing trend and perhaps find alternatives to the existing format to help enrich online communities and find new ways to promote better communication.

The second emphasis area for further research is the concept of how music has changed drastically over the past few decades. There are many facets to this concept. The first is the way in which records are being recorded. Although many mainstream recording artists are still recording in multi-million dollar studios, others are recording in much different ways. With recording software coming loaded on many computers and phones, it is no wonder so many musicians are recording on their own. Also, as the digital age continues to take over, we see many changes to the type of music. Kramer (2014) writes about how the overuse of auto-tune: "Auto-Tune has since become a standard studio necessity, used in the majority of records made in nearly every genre of music for years." When artists no longer need to be great to sound like they are great, does that diminish the quality of music? Front man of the Foo Fighters, Dave Grohl, believes it does.

Publicly opposed to auto-tune in the past, Grohl and his band decided to do something very radical for their 2011 album, *Wasting Light.* Rather than recording the album in "the most expensive studio with state-of-the-art equipment," Grohl decided to team up with legendary

recording producer Butch Vig, the man who recorded Nirvana's *Nevermind*[40] (1991), using all tape machines (Doyle, 2011). What's more is that they decided to record the album in Grohl's garage. The success of *Wasting Light* was massive: the album won four Grammy Awards including Best Rock Album, the album debuted at #1 in 12 countries, and has sold more than one million units (RCA, 2011).

The stark contrast between how music was once recorded, how music is recorded today, and how some bands, such as the Foo Fighters, attempt to go to great lengths to recapture the past show that this is an area that is worthy of further research. Also, more than just the technology, the essence of the recordings are losing their meaning with the instant gratification of home studios. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with home studios and newer methods to record, rather there are threats to the tradition and history of music by making such drastic leaps without having ground or basis for doing so.

Another area within music that could be reviewed is the role of social media. Many artists, such as pop sensation Charlie Puth, found success through social media (Ceron, 2016). Specifically, after winning a YouTube contest, Puth found his way to the top of the Billboard Charts in over 10 countries.[41] Some people, such as Adam Young of the electronica band Owl City, have found tremendous success with only online recordings. Reports say that Young created music in his parents' basement, posted songs online, and signed to a record deal without ever playing a live event (Sisario, 2009). More than an actual threat to music, this is simply an area in which the communication practices have changed so drastically that a thorough review would be beneficial.

[40] David Grohl was the drummer of Nirvana from 1990 until Kurt Cobain's death in 1994.
[41] American rapper Wiz Khalifa co-wrote a song with Puth entitled "See You Again," which found success in March of 2015.

Also, the concept of a concert is shifting, but not because of the artists, but because of the concertgoers. There have been thousands of studies on the effects of cell phones, such as Brownstein's article where he questions how technology such as cell phones changes community (2015). But there is a small niche when thinking about cell phone use at live concerts. Live performances are phenomenologically different experiences since the rise of smart phones. Concerts were once seen as a gathering of like-minded people; however, technology has mediated the performance of live concerts and has changed the perception of what constitutes a good live show.

Specifically, rock concerts are being devalued because of smart phones. There is a lack of appreciation of expert musical prowess, a lack of the engagement with other concertgoers, and the lack of the ability to immerse one's self in the sights and sounds of a live performance. Instead, three technologically-drive rituals that are now being injected into typical concert experiences: the overuse of photography and videography; the need to communicate through social media during concerts; and the overall apathetic nature of many attendees as they turn to mindlessly using smart phones instead of giving attention to the live acts and engaging in the experience of a concert.

In addition to education and music, I also believe there is a place for this methodology in interpersonal relationships. Relationships are taking on new meaning as they are mediated by technology. In Julia T. Wood's book, *Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters*, she discusses the extent to which technology is a part of our lives: "Another defining feature of our era is the pervasive presence of social media. We use e-mail and texting to stay in touch with friends and family. We join online support groups. We blog, check Facebook, Skype, text, and instant message (IM)" (xviii, 2012). The book is now in its 7th edition, originally published in

1996. The landscape of interpersonal communications continues to change due to our culture's reliance on technology. Wood's book provides an excellent primer for the subject, but there are some specific issues that perhaps could be dealt with in depth.

One area of interpersonal relationships that is changing rapidly is romantic relationships relying on texting. A research study was conducted to find some of the affects of texting specific issues:

> Overall, the more an individual used texting to discuss serious issues, broach confrontational subjects, and apologize, the more conflictual face-to-face communication behaviors existed for both themselves and their partners. Similar partner effects were found. When couples used texting to express affection, the less conflictual face-to-face communication behaviors existed for both partners. (Novak, Sandberg, Jeffrey, & Young-Davis, 2015)

The fact that texting directly connects to face-to-face relationships perhaps shows that the texting relationship becomes the dominant force, and the face-to-face relationship is then influenced by the texting. Instead of distance communication acting as a supplemental communication factor, many people are seeing that the technology becomes the dominant mode of communication. How this will affect romantic relationships, family relationships, friendships, and work relationships will be interesting to track over the upcoming years. If our culture continues to embrace technology without regard for the ethical, what will happen to interpersonal relationships in general? As people make choices based on what is easiest instead of what is closer to the mean, many will find themselves subscribing to Modernist concepts of progress and efficiency.

Education, music, and interpersonal communication are only a few areas in which this methodology could be applied. By finding places in which technology changes, focusing on the things to which we attend, and identifying areas that are in need of an ethical framework, one can then use this methodology elsewhere.

How to Preserve Baseball's Soul for Another Century

Although this project's methodology can be applied to many different areas, this project's main concern is the game of baseball. Looking back and identifying areas in which threaten the sanctity of baseball and evaluating those responses can only be taken to a certain point. Instead, attempting to look ahead to the future of baseball can provide virtually limitless benefits. To do so, one must be able to look ahead at some of the potential threats baseball may face in the future while keeping one's ground.

Perhaps the next quarter-century will have its own set of threats and Casey will be asked to once again come out of retirement for yet another imaginary at bat. The areas discussed in this project (PEDs, advanced metrics, and technology in the game) all remain in flux. Although baseball is currently handling each of these three areas, that does not mean significant attention will not be needed in the years to come, especially with technology in the game. But perhaps I can step back and think about some of the areas that are not currently affecting the game itself but may pose to be threats in years to come. Three areas in which baseball is vulnerable to threats are creating a game without umpires, losing youth interest, and a lack of women in baseball.

The first does seem like an offshoot to technology in baseball, but because this would be so aggressive, it can be seen as its own threat to the game. K.M. McFarland wrote an article for a website called Wired detailing the first use of umpire-assisted-cameras for calling balls and

strikes (2015). The game was played for the independent Pacific Association,[42] a league that is not affiliated with Major League Baseball. The game used a regular home plate umpire to call balls and strikes, but on close calls that the umpire was unsure of, another person, former MLB player Eric Byrnes, would make the call into a microphone based on what the pitching tracking device deemed to be a ball or a strike (2015). Although the idea is enticing to some (Stromberg, 2015), there are also others who understand its current limitations. ESPN Senior Staff Writer, David Schoenfield, writes about all of the benefits of robotic umpires that can determine a pitches location "within an inch of accuracy" (2015). However, Schoenfield still contends, "robot umps might not be any better than the living and breathing ones, at least right now" (2015). In Schoenfield's view, robotic umpires do not provide a perfect solution; additionally, he contends that people are trying to find a solution for something that isn't actually a problem (2015).

Pittsburgh writer, Tim Williams, writes about a different view on this topic. Williams delves into the intricacies of robotic umpires. Williams writes: "(Robotic umpires are) something that I think baseball definitely needs, as the variance and inconsistent game calling between different umpires is one of the worst things in the game right now" (2015). However, Williams finds that the technology is currently not ready. After reviewing data from a single game,[43]

[42] The Pacific Association of Professional Baseball Clubs (http://www.pacproclubs.com/) is an independent professional baseball league that is based in Northern California. Play began in 2013 and the league recently completed its third season in 2015. The league is currently comprised of four teams: San Rafael Pacifics, Sonoma Stompers, Vallejo Admirals and Pittsburg Diamonds.

[43] The game in which Williams reviewed was the Wild Card Playoff game in the National League on October 8, 2015 between the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Chicago Cubs. The television broadcast, TBS, showed the Cubs pitcher, Jake Arrieta, receiving a number of strike calls on balls that the pitch tracker clearly showed to be outside, causing many Pirate fans to become disgruntled with the umpire's calls. This situation led to Williams performing a major review using multiple different sources for accuracy.

Williams found many inconsistencies: "Between the TBS strike zone, Classic Gameday, Gameday, and the MLB App you had four different strike zones for the same pitches. Which one is correct?" (2015). Each of the four outlets are using sophisticated technology, yet the plot points show that they do not all agree on what constitutes a ball and what constitutes a strike. What was a strike according to one camera was a ball to another.

It seems, at least at this time, that the game of baseball is not ready for robot umpires calling balls and strikes. However, what will happen when the technology is refined enough to call balls and strikes accurately? Perhaps cameras will be able to make calls within a centimeter instead of an inch. Also, perhaps newer forms of technology can standardize the strike zone and calls – and make for a uniform strike zone in every park.[44] One of the best arguments against a fully robotic umpiring system is that the technology is currently not precise enough. But when the technology ultimately becomes good enough, what then? How real will the game feel without an umpire yelling "play ball," but instead a voice over the loud speaker.

The second potential threat to baseball is the youth movement away from baseball. The game of baseball is currently prospering. The St. Louis $1 billion dollar TV deal (Settimi, 2015), the Miami Marlins signed Giancarlo Stanton to a contract potentially[45] worth $325,000,000 (Polishuk and Adams, 2014) making him the highest paid athlete of all-time, and David Price signed a contract with the Boston Red Sox for seven years which could potentially[46] be worth $217MM (Adams and Wilmoth, 2015) making him the highest paid pitcher of all-time. These three major signings are just the tip of the iceberg. Major League Baseball is finding new ways to

[44] Another potential threat is that each park may not be totally standardized. So while one park may get the call perfect, pitching somewhere else could produce different results.
[45] Stanton's contact, which runs from 2015-2027, has a player opt out option after the 2020 season.
[46] Similar to Stanton's contact, Price's contract contains a player opt-out clause after the 2018 season. Price's contract runs from 2016-2022.

make money by negotiating more lucrative television contracts, rising revenue from phone apps such as *MLB At Bat*, and expanding the market outside of the United States. Mike Ozanian, *Forbes* Staff Writer, notes that the average team value of the 30 teams in Major League Baseball is $1.2 billion dollars, a record high (2015). All of these astronomical numbers point to baseball's continued monetary success; however, there are threats for the game's future being seen in studies.

Brian Costa wrote an article for *The Wall Street Journal* entitled "Why Children Are Abandoning Baseball" (2015). Costa's article references a study done by National Sporting Goods Association in which shows that baseball participation amongst children ages 7-17 is down from 8.8 million in 2000 to 5.3 million in 2013 for baseball and from 5.4 million in 2000 to 3.2 million in 2013 in softball (2015). Costa quoted Commissioner Manfred as saying "the biggest predictor of fan avidity as an adult is whether you played the game" (2015). So, these numbers are not to be taken lightly because they could eventually impact the game's relevance. Although the game of baseball is likely secure for the foreseeable future, what is the long-term future going to look like? The concept of tradition has been used throughout this project: the connection to the past is one of the threads that keeps baseball pure and also inherently different from other sports. If the youth movement continues to turn away from baseball, there is a legitimate chance there will be a crisis for the future of the game.

There are two aspects to consider about the decline of baseball amongst youth: one, internationally baseball is growing. In 1915, 96.6% of all Major League Baseball players were born in the United States; in 1947, after integration, the number was at 97.2%; however, the 2015 season saw only 72.5% of MLB players born in the United States (Spector, 2015). In addition to the percentage of players not born in the U.S., there is also the expansion of camps in other

countries. All 30 teams have a facility in the Dominican Republic (Drysdale, 2013). Also, baseball seems to expanding in every direction. “Gift Ngoepe, the slick fielding infielder in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization is attempting to become the first South African to play Major League baseball” (Glasgow, 2016). So, although the studies show a decline in baseball amongst U.S. born children, the popularity internationally is actually increasing.

A second point is that sports are diversifying in America. Some people are interested in different sports, and some children are moving away from sports all together. Both of these factors are swaying the numbers. One sport that has seen a recent increase is hockey. King (2015) finds that there has been a major increase in hockey: “44 percent among 6- to 17-year-olds in the five years since USA Hockey overhauled its youth programs,” led by the league’s changes for children in which decreased travel and decreased the physicality. Also the study, conducted by 2015 SFIA U.S. Trends in Team Sports Report, surveyed youth athletics ages 6-17 from 2009-2014. The study found major increases in rugby (101%), lacrosse (29%), and volleyball (23%). Additionally, although baseball dropped by 4% and slow pitch softball dropped by 11%, fast pitch softball saw a modest increase of 1%. According to this study, many other sports are also in jeopardy: wrestling dropped by 41%, touch football by 32%, and tackle football by 18% (King, 2015). This is an indictor showing that all sports are vulnerable to this shift, and not just baseball.

More than just baseball’s youth participation dropping, there is also a movement for youths moving away from sports altogether. Findings from The Aspen Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to "fostering enlightened leadership, the appreciation of timeless ideas and values, and open-minded dialogue on contemporary issues" (The Aspen Institute, 2016), found that fewer children are playing sports. Alice Lee (2015) wrote about a major problem with

youth sports:

> In the time period from 2008 to 2013, sports participation and fitness have significantly dropped. Nearly 3 million fewer children have played basketball, soccer, track and field, baseball, football, and softball, and less than 1 in 3 children between the ages of 6-12 participated in a high-calorie-burning sport or fitness activity three times a week, according to SFIA data. (Lee, 2015)

Lee's aim is to keep children engaged and healthy, and her findings are not for the promotion or demotion of any sport in particular. Lee shows that there is an inherent issue with the current youth. So, perhaps it is not about children moving away from baseball as much as it is more children moving to a sedentary lifestyle.

Although the numbers from Costa (2015) may not be as bad as thought due to the international expansion, children becoming involved with different sports, and other children moving away from sports altogether, there is still an underlying issue that may become a legitimate threat to the game of baseball in the future. The economics of the game show that the league is very stable, and each of the 30 teams is profitable (Ozanian, 2015). However, this is another area that may have to be dealt with over the decade few decades.

Finally, another potential threat to the game is not so much of a threat at all, but rather an opportunity: women in the game of baseball. This does not mean that it would be a threat to the game if a woman become a player or a coach, but rather, what will happen if a woman does not become part of the game. The lack of women in the sport could eventually hurt the overall identity of the game and stun its opportunity to create new traditions.

In the summer of 2015, there was talk of women in baseball: "Melissa Mayeux made international headlines when she became the first woman to be added to MLB's international

registration list" (Maine, 2015). Although no team selected Mayeux, the 16-year-old is still poised to eventually break the gender-barrier in Major League Baseball. Mayeux is just one example of females in professional sports. Manon Rhéaume is the first and only female hockey player to actually play in the NHL (Basu, 2012). Rhéaume primarily played for minor league NHL affiliates, but did appear in preseason games for the NHL. Outside of Rhéaume, there have been no professional female athletes in any of the four major sports.

As far as coaching goes, Becky Hammon is the first full-time assistant coach in any of the four major sports (Fagan, 2014). Hammon is an assistant coach for the NBA team the San Antonio Spurs, but prior to her coaching days, she spent 16 years as a guard in the WNBA, six of which she was an All-Star. Additionally, the Buffalo Bills announced in January of 2016 that Kathryn Smith would become the new special teams quality control coach for the 2016 season, making her the first full-time female coach in the NFL (Rodak, 2016). Currently, Hammon and Smith are the only two female full-time coaches in any of the four major sports.

The gender barrier may be one of the next major hurdles to overcome for baseball's future. That having been said, the gender barrier in sports should not be seen as the same thing as the color barrier that Jackie Robinson broke in 1947 because of the racism and prejudice associated with the color barrier. However, as time goes on and women rightfully become a part of different walks of life, the sporting world will have to adjust. This is not to say that a gifted female athlete is prohibited to play in any professional league, but to this point is has not happened.

In the summer of 2014, *Sports Illustrated* had a picture of a 13-year-old girl on the cover: Mo'ne Davis. Davis helped her team, Philadelphia's Taney Dragons, get to the Little League World Series (Axson, 2014). Sweeping the nation by storm, Davis found herself to be a

sensation. But more than just being a girl, Davis performed on an elite level. This begs the question: if not now, then when? When will a female be in the dugout over the course of 162 games? When will a female be starring down at a batter in a World Series game? Emily Shire questions whether or not it is a perpetual culture problem in America to leave girls out of baseball:

> (W)e actively keep women from participating in baseball, instead encouraging young girls who like the sport to pursue softball instead. The division of men in baseball and women in softball is so entrenched in U.S. sports that we rarely take a moment to ponder that the split is neither natural nor necessary. (Shire, 2015)

Perhaps this leads to a much larger question about American society. Our country continues to make strides to rectify gender inequalities; however, there is still much work to be done. Not only should women be *allowed* to apply for coaching jobs or to try out for teams, but they should be all-out encouraged to do so. Diversifying the game can help to put the most qualified people into positions, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, country of origin, or any other differentiating factor.

These three potential threats are not yet affecting the game. However, these and many others could potentially throw another pitch Casey's way. The goal then, is to be able to handle whatever comes next. To do so, the game of baseball will need to look to the past to learn from successes and mistakes, look to the future for direction, but always keep the ground in which it stands.

This project shows that the call for a communication ethics response is necessary in the game of baseball. The game is tied to its past and traditions, yet the current culture seems to want to skip ahead without maintaining the firm connection with the ground of the game. An

individual's feelings on PEDs, advanced metrics, or technology in the game can differ, but the common ground must remain the same: the game's past is worth protecting and promoting through the current changes to the game.

Arnett notes that "Without tradition as the connecting link between past and future, the existential world calls for renewed clarity of thinking and dedication in our thinking" (Arnett, 2013, p. 49). Perhaps this clarity in thinking can take place by using Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. Limiting extremes is one component to Aristotle's work, but also integral are the connection to action and the connection to the ethical. Communication ethics, then, is not merely a framework in which one can apply when one sees fit, but rather, a framework that one is responsible for applying, because one ought to do so. The existential world calls for us to act, and it is through Aristotelian ethics that we are asked to consider the ethical implications for a given situation in a given historical moment.

Baseball was invented as a game, but over a century later it is clearly much more than that. The constant move toward technology is a move of efficiency and accuracy. Instead of aligning with progress, the aim should instead be about preserving the tradition and essence of the game. In a time of narrative contention, it becomes not only important, but rather imperative to reflect on decisions and ensure we "protect and promote" the good of the game. Change is inevitable, but the spirit of baseball can remain if the game continues to limit extremes.

Extra Innings: Casey's Hope

Baseball will undoubtedly encounter more troubling times through the next century, but the game will endure. In Thayer's original poem, Casey watched the two pitches go without swinging. And down 0-2 in the count, Casey struck out on his third and final pitch. But, again, what would it look like is Casey had another opportunity, another at bat. Casey was able to learn many things throughout this project: avoid extremes; remain attentive to one's own ground; be weary of the promise of progress; remember the past and be aware of the future, but always remained focused on the historical moment; and the game of baseball is much bigger than a single player.

Below is a revised version of Ernest Thayer's "Casey at the Bat," entitled "Casey's Hope."

"Casey's Hope"

The Outlook was bleak again for the Mudville nine that day;
The scoreboard glowed bright, beaming: down by two with one to play.
And the little faith that remained was quickly fading,
With a groundout and a pop out, the loss was all but waiting.

A listless crowd turned attention from the field to their phones;
The only sound was noiseless swiping mixed with heavy moans.
'Cause with two out and no one on, Casey was in the hole,
And no one was standing as probabilities were low.

Complicated metrics flashed on thousands of tiny screens;
"Pinch hit with a lefty," shouted the sabermetric teens.
As if everyone knew better and the coach just wouldn't bend,
The fans scoffed and criticized as they waited for the end.

But just as quickly as faith was lost, it once again was found,
When Flynn dropped down a bunt, and the pitcher slipped off the mound.
And with a man on first, Jimmy laced a double down the line,
Bringing up the old man, the has-been, swinging his bat of pine.

The crowd roared as though they had always known they would have a chance,
Like they attended every game, and weren't just fair-weather fans.
Music blasted through the park's PA, and people stomped and clapped,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

His face was now weathered with age, his hands calloused and hard;
He wore his battle scars proudly, showing off that which was marred.
His home run numbers had decreased with years, but some things remained;
He still doffed his cap out of respect each time he reached the plate.

The infielders shifted according to the scouting report;
And Casey waited, knowing he was his team's last resort.
As he stood in the box, as was according to the rules,
He thought back and was reminded of the game he once did lose.

Distracted by the distant past, his mind slipped from the game,
He barely noticed the pitcher's wind up, let alone the pitcher's name.
And when the ball came screaming, barreling toward the catcher's mitt,
Casey's tried to act, but was late and missed by quite a bit.

His deficiency was clear, and his approach had to change;
What would happen if his method could produce a new exchange?
He would no longer be known as the hero who struck out;
With a homer here, he'd go to the Hall of Fame, no doubt!

With his newfound goal and the prospect of what was to come,
Casey imagined his induction, as he chomped on his gum.
But instead of a fastball sizzling across the plate,
A bendy curve dropped in, but Casey realized it too late.

His overzealous hack was one of impatient excess;
Focusing solely on the future, on Modernist progress.
Embarrassed and deflated, he tapped his cleats with his bat,
Suddenly reminded of the ground on which his feet sat.

No longer fixed on the past or the future, Casey glared;
Eyes locked on the pitcher, the present situation, he stared.
Drowning out the crowd to better focus on his mission,
Casey knew what he ought to do for the game's tradition.

Finding the thread from the past and carrying it onward,
Casey's hope is to preserve the game as it moves forward.
He swung with neither deficiency nor excess, but found the mean;
Casey smashed a home run for baseball, and won the game for his team.

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Author's Notes

Due to the emphasis on baseball and baseball statistics, this project had to utilize some websites in unique ways. This note is to appropriately apply credit for the works as well as help others who may wish to research such information. A few of the baseball websites in which were used heavily throughout this project were *Baseball-Almanac***,** *FanGraphs*, and *Baseball-Reference*. Each of these websites is dedicated to Major and Minor League Baseball statistics. The websites maintain statistics from the beginning of recorded baseball, and many statistics were pulled from these websites for this project. The ability to obtain and use vast amounts of data was an integral component to this project.

FanGraphs

Specifically in the case of *FanGraphs*, the website offers the ability to create customized reports. A person can cross-reference different statistics with qualifiers and/or stipulations (such as a report that would show all players who hit 100 home runs before turning 25 years old since 1950). Due to the scope of this project, I had to construct reports to illustrate certain points. If a person wished to recreate such reports, that would be possible; however, because statistics are in a state of perpetual flux, some of the findings could be slightly different, specifically for the all-time numbers. All historic figures were gathered after the 2015 season.

Baseball-Reference

As for *Baseball-Reference*, the website has a number of standard reports, but the reports do not have titles of their own. The reports are available after highlighting sections on a page. For example, the website can give averages over a span of time by group different rows together (like finding out that Andrew McCutchen averaged a .905 OPS from 2011-2015).

Baseball-Almanac

In the case of *Baseball-Almanac,* the site does have particular pages for statistics; however, the pages are regularly updated or augmented. Meaning if I provided URLs for a particular web page, there is a good chance that the specifics would change and/or the links would be unusable. Additionally, the website is often changing and retitles pages, making all information in flux. One of the goals of this website is to continually ensure that they have the most up-to-date and complete statistics, but by doing so, the site has to eliminate older pages frequently.

All-Time Rankings

Baseball is a game of statistics, and this project relied heavily on the numbers of the game. For the most part, I tried to incorporate statistics that would not easily change; however, since I used all-time rankings in a few instances, I am aware that those could change over time. Players like Alex Rodriguez, Miguel Cabrera, and Albert Pujols could challenge some of the all-time records in the upcoming years. Additionally, young players like Mike Trout and Bryce Harper could potentially break into some of the all-time numbers before long considering their ages, the abilities, and their current projections. Reminder: all statistical information is accurate through the 2015 Major League Baseball season.

Appendix A

“Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888”

By: Ernest Thayer

The Outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, if only Casey could get but a whack at that -
We'd put up even money, now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despis-ed, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped-
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.
"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;
And its likely they'd a-killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered fraud;
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville - mighty Casey has struck out.

Appendix B

“Casey’s Revenge”

By: Grantland Rice

There were saddened hearts in Mudville for a week or even more;
There were muttered oaths and curses- every fan in town was sore.
"Just think," said one, "how soft it looked with Casey at the bat,
And then to think he'd go and spring a bush league trick like that!"

All his past fame was forgotten- he was now a hopeless "shine."
They called him "Strike-Out Casey," from the mayor down the line;
And as he came to bat each day his bosom heaved a sigh,
While a look of hopeless fury shone in mighty Casey's eye.

He pondered in the days gone by that he had been their king,
That when he strolled up to the plate they made the welkin ring;
But now his nerve had vanished, for when he heard them hoot
He "fanned" or "popped out" daily, like some minor league recruit.

He soon began to sulk and loaf, his batting eye went lame;
No home runs on the score card now were chalked against his name;
The fans without exception gave the manager no peace,
For one and all kept clamoring for Casey's quick release.

The Mudville squad began to slump, the team was in the air;
Their playing went from bad to worse - nobody seemed to care.
"Back to the woods with Casey!" was the cry from Rooters' Row.
"Get some one who can hit the ball, and let that big dub go!"

The lane is long, some one has said, that never turns again,
And Fate, though fickle, often gives another chance to men;
And Casey smiled; his rugged face no longer wore a frown-
The pitcher who had started all the trouble came to town.

All Mudville had assembled - ten thousand fans had come
To see the twirler who had put big Casey on the bum;
And when he stepped into the box, the multitude went wild;
He doffed his cap in proud disdain, but Casey only smiled.

"Play ball!" the umpire's voice rang out, and then the game began.
But in that throng of thousands there was not a single fan
Who thought that Mudville had a chance, and with the setting sun
Their hopes sank low- the rival team was leading "four to one."

The last half of the ninth came round, with no change in the score;
But when the first man up hit safe, the crowd began to roar;
The din increased, the echo of ten thousand shouts was heard
When the pitcher hit the second and gave "four balls" to the third.

Three men on base - nobody out - three runs to tie the game!
A triple meant the highest niche in Mudville's hall of fame;
But here the rally ended and the gloom was deep as night,
When the fourth one "fouled to catcher" and the fifth "flew out to right."

A dismal groan in chorus came; a scowl was on each face
When Casey walked up, bat in hand, and slowly took his place;
His bloodshot eyes in fury gleamed, his teeth were clenched in hate;
He gave his cap a vicious hook and pounded on the plate.

But fame is fleeting as the wind and glory fades away;
There were no wild and woolly cheers, no glad acclaim this day;
They hissed and groaned and hooted as they clamored: "Strike him out!"
But Casey gave no outward sign that he had heard this shout.

The pitcher smiled and cut one loose - across the plate it sped;
Another hiss, another groan. "Strike one!" the umpire said.
Zip! Like a shot the second curve broke just below the knee.
"Strike two!" the umpire roared aloud; but Casey made no plea.

No roasting for the umpire now - his was an easy lot;
But here the pitcher whirled again- was that a rifle shot?
A whack, a crack, and out through the space the leather pellet flew,
A blot against the distant sky, a speck against the blue.

Above the fence in center field in rapid whirling flight
The sphere sailed on - the blot grew dim and then was lost to sight.
Ten thousand hats were thrown in air, ten thousand threw a fit,
But no one ever found the ball that mighty Casey hit.

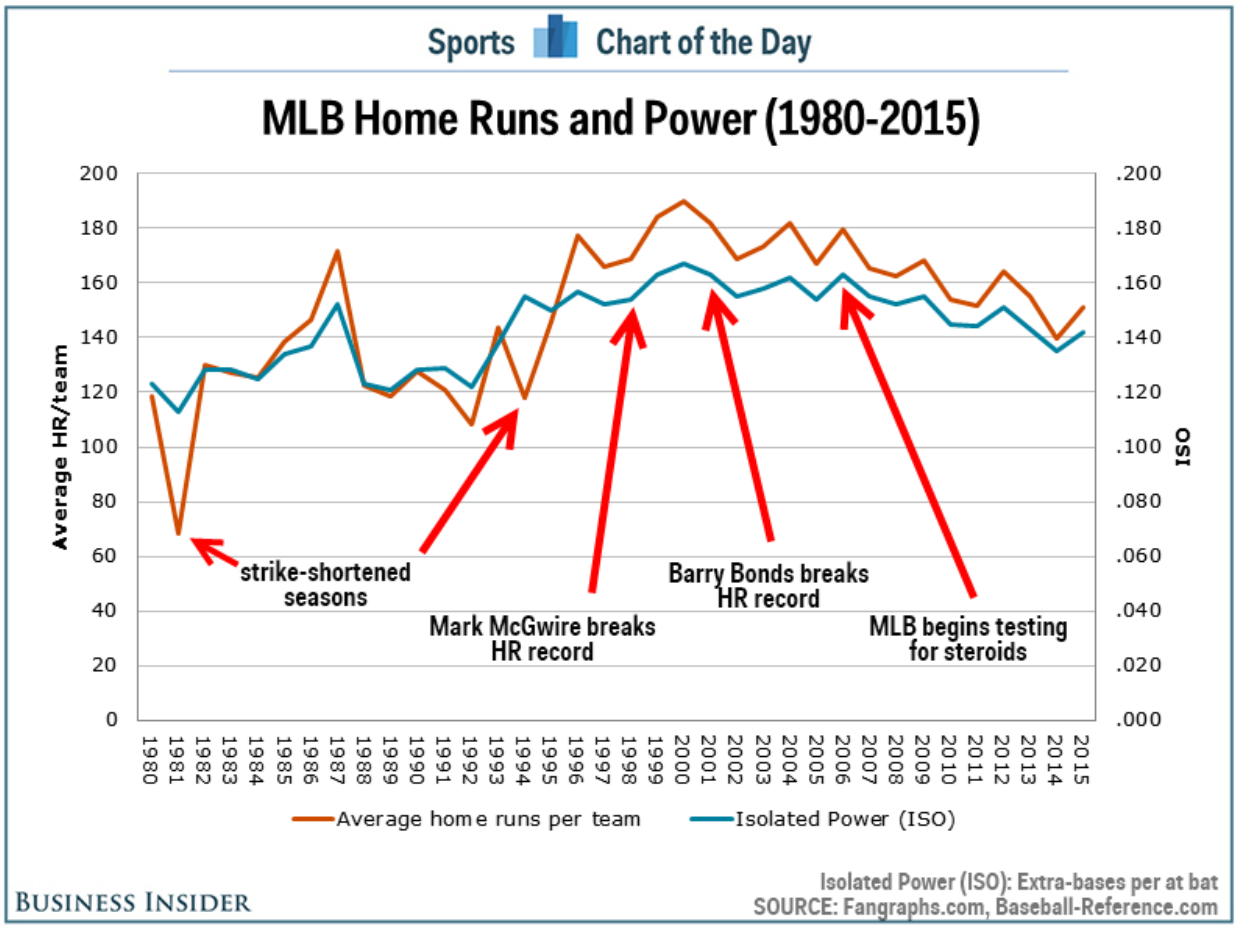
O, somewhere in this favored land dark clouds may hide the sun,
And somewhere bands no longer play and children have no fun!
And somewhere over blighted lives there hangs a heavy pall,
But Mudville hearts are happy now, *for Casey hit the ball*.

Appendix C

#	Season	Name	Team	HR
1	2001	Barry Bonds	Giants	73
2	1998	Mark McGwire	Cardinals	70
3	1998	Sammy Sosa	Cubs	66
4	1999	Mark McGwire	Cardinals	65
5	2001	Sammy Sosa	Cubs	64
6	1999	Sammy Sosa	Cubs	63
7	2006	Ryan Howard	Phillies	58
8	1997	Mark McGwire	- - -	58
9	2001	Luis Gonzalez	Diamondbacks	57
10	2002	Alex Rodriguez	Rangers	57
11	1997	Ken Griffey Jr.	Mariners	56
12	1998	Ken Griffey Jr.	Mariners	56
13	2007	Alex Rodriguez	Yankees	54
14	2006	David Ortiz	Red Sox	54
15	1996	Mark McGwire	Athletics	52
16	2002	Jim Thome	Indians	52
17	2001	Alex Rodriguez	Rangers	52
18	1990	Cecil Fielder	Tigers	51
19	2005	Andruw Jones	Braves	51
20	1995	Albert Belle	Indians	50
21	1996	Brady Anderson	Orioles	50
22	2000	Sammy Sosa	Cubs	50
23	2007	Prince Fielder	Brewers	50
24	1998	Greg Vaughn	Padres	50

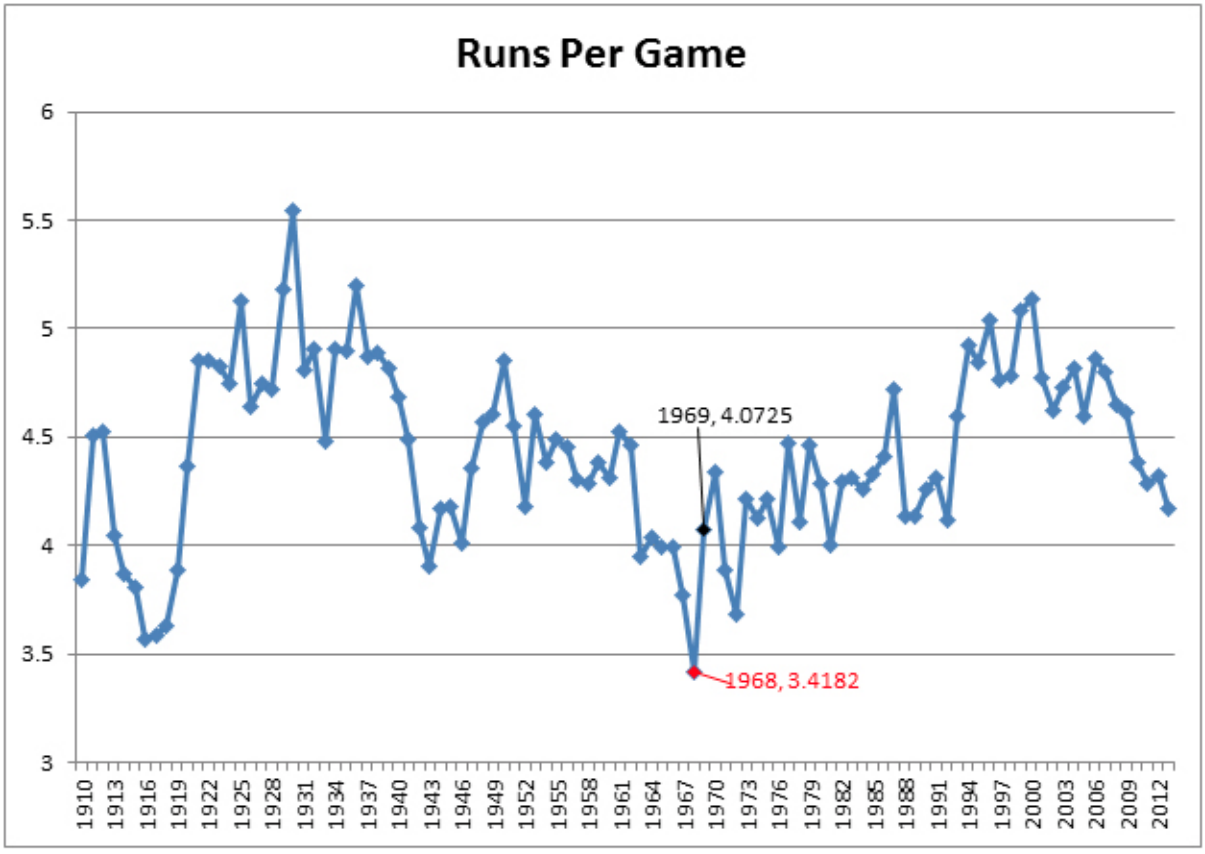
(FanGraphs, 2015)

Appendix D



(Gaines, 2015)

Appendix E



(Resor, 2014)